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biography

an interdisciplinary quarterly

Robert S. Robins and Jerrold M. Post
The Political Actor & Paranoia

Susanna Egan Autobiography & Heroism

Paul Jay Autobiography & Critical Theory

Marcia Jacobson Autobiography & Howells

Hamilton Cochrane · Biography & Brotherhood

Review

Volume 10 Number 1 Winter 1987

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Robert S. Robins & Jerrold M. Post

The Paranoid Political Actor 1

The psychodynamics and clinical phenomenology of the paranoid position are related to the phenomenon of the paranoid political actor. The paranoid political actor's interaction with the environment has characteristics of a self-fulfilling prophecy, for his defensive aggression ultimately creates a genuinely hostile environment which he at first only delusively fears. While the flagrant paranoid is usually recognized as ill, the unrecognized paranoid can be highly effective as a leader. The degree and scope of his effectiveness depends on his political skill and the receptiveness of the polity. When the frame of reference is transcendent, and the skilled paranoid political actor finds a receptive polity, the destructive charismatic leader-follower relationship ensues.

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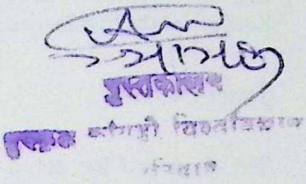

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Robert S. Robins
Jerrold M. Post, M.D.

The Paranoid Political Actor

The wave of emotion that recently swept around the globe on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Holocaust was forceful testimony to the powerful effects of the paranoid political actor, effects that have changed the shape of history. As is often the case in the interdisciplinary "marriage" of political psychology, there are a number of distinct and incomplete literatures bearing on this complex phenomenon. Thus there is a clinical literature bearing on the paranoid syndrome, contributed to by psychiatrists and psychologists for the most part, which deals with paranoid illness and the paranoid patients as a clinical phenomenon. This literature, by and large, focuses on psychopathology, and only in passing deals with the relationship between the paranoid and society.

On the other hand, investigations of the paranoid as political actor by scholars from the disciplines of history and political science (see Hofstadter, 1965; and Tucker, 1965), while illuminating the effects of the paranoid on society, tend to be descriptive, without a comprehensive description of the clinical phenomenology, psychological dynamics, and character dynamics of the paranoid.

In this essay, we shall try to bridge these disciplines and approaches, delineating the psychodynamic and phenomenological aspects of the paranoid person, and exploring the interaction of the paranoid with his world and the manner in which the paranoid political actor can powerfully affect his polity.

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The Paranoid Mode: Interpersonal Relations and World View

The boundaries of the concept of paranoia are elusive. For, as Meissner (1978) has observed in his comprehensive review, the term is used not only to denote psychiatric illness, but also a descriptive personality trait characterized by isolation, hypersensitivity, guardedness, suspiciousness, and the use of projection as a defense. Moreover, in recent years, the term has been broadened to characterize an outlook or attitude. From this point of view, a paranoid state of mind can be looked on as an organized system of coherent beliefs which, while distorting reality, may serve adaptive needs.

Of primary importance to understanding the paranoid is comprehending the complexity of his thinking. Swanson et al. (1970) have identified the following central characteristics of paranoid thinking:

a. projective thinking
b. hostility
c. suspiciousness
d. centrality
e. delusions
f. fear of loss of autonomy
g. grandiosity

The sine qua non of the paranoid syndrome and paranoid thinking is overreliance on the defense mechanism of projection, one of the most primitive ego defenses. Anna Freud (1937) has described projection as the expulsion of unwanted ideas or affects from the conscious ego and their relegation to the outside world. Characteristically, the defense of projection is found in association with two other primitive defense mechanisms: denial and distortion. Vallain (1977), drawing on the work of Semrad, has elaborated a hierarchy of ego defenses and has identified as the most primitive defense those associated with the most severe psychiatric illnesses, the narcissistic triad of denial, distortion, and projection.

Sullivan (1943) has observed that "the essence of the paranoid syndrome is the transfer of blame." Unable to accept responsibility for his own failure, the paranoid comforts himself by reasoning, "It's not me, it's them. It's their fault." Indeed, paranoids are disproportionately represented in the ranks of terrorists whose ideology is in effect a projection onto the establishment of the cause for individual failure (Post, 1984).

Psychoanalytic investigations of self-psychology have clarified a central mechanism of borderline and narcissistic individuals which

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facilitates the use of projection. The mechanism is splitting. The individual splits off the devalued aspects of himself and projects them onto another individual or group. Sullivan (1943) puts this well when he observes that "the paranoid becomes aware of inferiority, cannot tolerate this, and projects the blame onto others. The unacceptable thought is that 'I am inferior. Therefore people will dislike me and I will not be accepted.' This in turn fuels the compensatory face-saving paranoid notion that 'it is not I that have something wrong with me but that he (or they) does something to me.' "

Swanson (1970) has observed that "the feeling that others have antagonistic feelings towards one is a hallmark of the paranoid mode of thinking." Regularly the paranoid is acutely aware of outside enemies, so that being on guard against the persecutor is central to survival, and destroying the persecutor is an act of self-defense. While the paranoid's notion that others are out to get him is often initially inaccurate, it may come to be true (Lemert, 1967). As the paranoid behaves in such a way as to justify his own worst fears, his accusations become self-fulfilling. The paranoid is acutely sensitive to outside enemies, but magnificently oblivious to his own role in creating them.

Hyperalertness to the environment is characteristic of the paranoid. There is a readiness, indeed almost an eagerness, to find evidence of a hostile interpersonal environment. In this hostile world, there is no such thing as a coincidence. If there is a possibility of providing a negative or hostile explanation for an otherwise innocent event, the paranoid will do so.

The paranoid then has a tendency to view himself as the center of interest to others. This feeling that everyone is concerned is a defense against the feeling that no one is concened. This feeling—that everyone is concerned—can expand to the notion of a fantasized structure of relationships, what Cameron (1943) has called the paranoid pseudo-community.

Thus we are describing the paranoid posture as fundamentally an interpersonal posture. The paranoid constructs a world to which fear is central; it is against him that forces are aligned. To challenge this fearful conclusion is not to reassure. Quite to the contrary. To be surrounded by enemies is to be important, and to deprive an individual of his enemies is to divest him of importance. The paranoid position then is restitutive. It asserts significance, importance, centrality. There is nothing more devastating than to be insignificant; it is preferable to be persecuted than to be ignored. This accounts for the unassailable certainty of the paranoid's thinking; it has a rigidity that brooks no

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doubts. The paranoid's view of his world is a fixed conclusion searching for confirmatory evidence, and data which do not support the conclusion are to be excluded. To challenge his "logic" is to reap a harvest of anger. For to pierce the armor of paranoid certainty is to reveal the profound underlying self-doubt, and this is anxiety-provoking to the extreme.

If profound self-doubts and feelings of insignificance are at the core of the paranoid, what accounts for the grandiosity which is so often seen in the paranoid? This grandiosity is defensive, denying the unacceptable feelings of worthlessness.

Political Paranoia as a Pseudo-Adaptive Illness

Up to now we have used the term "paranoid" generically. But the umbrella term "paranoid" subsumes a spectrum of disorders, ranging from transient episodes of exaggerated suspiciousness, to which we are all subject, through the paranoid personality to severe psychopathological paranoid states characterized by loss of contact with reality and delusion formation. Individuals manifesting the flagrant paranoid psychoses—paranoid schizophrenia, the paranoid involutional states, and the paranoid illnesses associated with severe illness—are readily recognized as mentally ill.

But individuals with severe distortion of their reality testing whose mental life is vividly paranoid may exist unrecognized in society, and the behavior which springs from their paranoid psychological constellation can have major effects on their interpersonal environments. Such individuals with early paranoid pathology who do not have a full-blown psychosis may more powerfully influence their environment than individuals with severe paranoid psychopathology. This reflects a paradox concerning the severity of paranoid psychopathology and the effects on the surrounding interpersonal environment. For the subtle manifestions of the paranoid disorders are often not recognized as illness; indeed, the emotional intensity of the litigious paranoid or the righteous paranoid with a cause may have a powerful effect on those around him. As Greenacre (1971) has observed, in order to be an effective charismatic leader it is useful to be at least somewhat paranoid. To genuinely believe that the source of the problems is "out there" and effectively communicate this is very persuasive to the followers seeking a strong leader with clear answers. It is comforting to hear that the problem is not with "us" but with "them" and that therefore the solution is to get rid of "them." This is central to the dynamics of destruc-

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tive charismatic leader-follower relationships as well as to the dynamics of terrorist groups.

The flagrant paranoid, on the other hand, is readily identified as mentally ill and either ignored, identified as an eccentric, or if more belligerent or aggressive, confined in either a mental hospital or a prison.

The focus of this article, the paranoid political actor, with certain notable exceptions will be concerned with the paranoid personality and the effects of subtle—and unrecognized—paranoid disorders.

The Paranoid as a Political Type: Political Skill, Environmental Receptivity, and Political Success

Robert Tucker (1965) has offered an excellent analysis of the hypersuspicious personality as an effective leader of certain organizations and societies. He sees hypersuspiciousness as an aspect of a wider personality, one that he designates the warfare personality. Sharing many characteristics with the paranoid as described in the psychiatric literature —having obsessions of conspiracy, persecution, and frequent self-perceptions of grandiosity—the warfare personality views the world as consisting of enemies, organized for the purpose of destroying him and his group. This implacably hostile organization is wide, far-reaching, and vicious. A conspiracy, it largely operates in secrecy, its style one of unremitting attack, consequently leading to a pervasive suspicion of all, even the closest and seemingly most loyal associates. The warfare personality sees himself as being at war, not merely a civil or foreign war, but a war knowing no geographic or temporal boundaries. Seeing the world in this way, the warfare personality's own pathologies are thus politicized—the apotheosis of Lasswell's private affect being projected on a public object and being rationalized in the public interest (Lasswell, 1930).

Reading the biographies of people such as John Brown, Hitler, Stalin, and Ivan IV, one cannot but believe that the self-stated perceptions were sincere and that it was the very sincerity of the leader's beliefs that helped attract support, and, earlier, helped account for these leaders' tenacity. Tucker concludes that this sort of person—projecting his feelings of persecution on larger groups, being self-centered but appearing to be group-centered, having a talent for self-dramatization and being aggressive—is likely to be a leader of a fighting organization and is indeed "characteristic of the totalitarian dictator as a personality type." (Tucker, 1965, p. 579)

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The important point for Tucker is that the warfare personality has political characteristics as well and operates in a political context. Thus, he is a political personality type, and the degree of his efficacy as political leader will depend in large part upon his political skills. The magnitude of his following will depend in part upon his frame of reference. The following two-dimensional matrix (Table 1) illustrates the point that the paranoid actor's role in the political system is a function of the scope of his delusions (his frame of reference) and the effectiveness of his political skills.

Many of the successful paranoidal leaders fitting these categories are all too familiar. The highly skilled paranoidal leader with a transcendent message is classically epitomized by Adolph Hitler. On the other hand, millenarian paranoidal leaders who fail are by and large obscure. They stand on the street corner or appear on one of the more obscure cable television channels and are ignored; they write their pamphlets but the pamphlets remain unsold; they attempt to dramatize themselves by some act of violence but are soon forgotten. A borderline success was Jim Jones (Abse and Ulman, 1983), who led scores who had

TABLE I

Level of Political Skill	Type of Appeal: Transcendent	Group	Self	
High	Fighting Millenarian Leader	Fight/Flight Group Leader	Agitator with Personal Cause	Successful
Low	Prophet in The Wilderness	Fight/Flight Group Leader	Crank	Unsuccessful

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followed him in flight to the jungles of Guyana, made a transcendent politico-religious appeal, but was only able to gain the support of a few hundred. Even these misfits could only be retained through isolation, intimidation, and finally by mass suicide. History is replete with paranoid prophets in the wilderness who never become anything else.

The next category—Group—refers to a narrower appeal by a leader, an appeal only to a specific contemporary group. The group may be as large as a nation or it may have another organizing principle, such as ethnicity or religion. Such a leader may seek to meet a country's immediate economic needs or may seek to aid an ethnic group to retain its distinctiveness. The first term, "fight/flight group leader," and its associated concept, is derived from the work of Wilfred Bion (1961) and refers to the leader who directs the group's attention to the outside enemy as a way of unifying the group. The group's meaning is predicated on the outside enemy. The group must fight against or flee from that enemy lest it be destroyed by him.

National leaders often succeed by "fighting," by directing their nation's attention outwards, against the common enemy. While some of these, such as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, are not paranoid and are simply using a tried and true political technique, the fight/flight leader who does have a paranoid outlook and genuinely believes that the danger is from an outside enemy and that his nation's problems are not its fault but caused by that outside enemy can be especially effective in mobilizing his polity.

A paranoidal fighting group leader of this type who demonstrated considerable political skill, acquired a large following, and was stopped perhaps only by his assassination was Malcolm X. Malcolm X believed that blacks were the special children of God and that whites were the special children of the devil. History, politics, and indeed almost all social relations could be explained in these terms (Malcolm X, 1964; Breitman, 1965, 67; Malcolm X and Farmer, 1966).

There are also those paranoids who seek leadership of the group but are rejected. Also, there are those who believe they see a group in distress that does not in fact exist. They preach class warfare and revolution to a satisfied working class; they try to persuade a secure and integrated ethnic group that it must flee before an impending holocaust that only exists within the aspiring leader's own fantasy. They attempt, with little success, to create great crises out of manageable conflicts. These persons may be called political troublemakers and nuisances, though those terms are often far too mild. Meissner, for example, offers a description of "Fred F," who had a paranoidal politi-

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cal message, but it was unsuccessful in bringing others to his way of thinking (Meissner, 1978, pp. 283–320). An historically more important, though somewhat obscure unsuccessful paranoidal leader—who nevertheless did a great deal of damage to his purported enemies—was Corneliu Zella Codreanu, religio-Fascist leader of Romania's Iron Guard (Barbu, 1968). Codreanu believed he had received a special visit in 1923 from the Archangel Michael, who ordered a series of secret blood rituals, special dances and songs and constant warfare against Jews and Communists. In part due to his political limitations, this paranoid appeal failed.

The last category—Self—refers to a paranoidal appeal made by a person in his own interest and in his own interest alone. Such an appeal, in itself, is not political. It often occurs, however, within a political context and has political consequences. It is therefore considered here. An extreme demand by a prickly cabinet officer or by an overambitious White House aide driven by an overreaching desire for authority would be such an example. Such events can occur in any organization if one skillful person makes plausible exaggerated accusations of unfairness. For a brief period, such a skillful disrupter can cause a great deal of turmoil and mutual suspicion. If, however, the person making the exaggerated claims lacks such skill, then he will simply be a crank.

A paranoidal leader of considerable political skill who made no significant transcendent or group appeal was "Papa Doc" Duvalier, dictator of Haiti for over a decade. Duvalier engaged in bizarre rationalization of his behavior and nearly random political murders of "enemies" (Diedrich and Burt, 1969). Two self-regarding paranoids who had no substantial political effects despite their high positions were Minister of Foreign Affairs Castlereagh of George IV's Liverpool Government (Henry, 1970) and Truman's Secretary of Defense James Forrestal (Rogow, 1963, 1969). Both men fell victim to depression and paranoid delusions while in office after distinguished careers, were removed due to their pathological behavior, and both committed suicide soon thereafter while under imperfect psychiatric restraint. After the onset of their paranoia, both became and were rapidly seen as cranks within their respective institutions.

A leader's ability, too, may improve or degenerate over time. Mao Ze Dong's ability to maintain contol of China was clearly affected by declining abilities in the 1970s, probably from cerebral arteriosclerosis. The alertness to the environment which helped him maintain his control over the decades of the leadership became increasingly exag-

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gerated in his last years. Mao's suspiciousness mounted to the point of paranoid distrust, and individuals who had been loyal to him since the Great March were purged. For Stalin too, adaptive political wariness mounted in his last years to the point of paranoia. By the end of his life his adaptive paranoid attitude had magnified to what would probably be characterized clinically as a paranoid state, most tangibly expressed in "The Doctors' Plot" (Tucker, 1973; Post, 1980). Another example is Sukarno of Indonesia, who showed great ability in exploiting with a paranoid style a highly receptive audience. Physical illness, most likely uremia, steadily degraded his political ability, leading eventually to his imprisonment. Sukarno went from a fighting millenarian leader to a prophet in the wilderness to a mere crank eventually. Malcolm X describes in his autobiography (1964) how he first had to develop his ideology and rhetorical style in prison in order to make an effective appeal. Malcolm X started as a crank and died as an emerging fight/flight group leader.

Receptiveness of the Population: Interaction Between the Paranoid Political Actor and His Environment

The sixfold categorization just discussed considered two dimensions—the frame of reference of the paranoid leader and his political skills. But every political leader operates in a political context, and the ability of the paranoid political actor to resonate with a following depends at least in part on the nature of that following and that context. While to a substantial degree his political skills will influence his capacity to attract followers, the paranoid's political success will also depend substantially on the nature of the polity. There are times and cultures especially susceptible to the siren song of the paranoid leader. To the members of a wounded society searching for answers to their shared dilemma, searching for someone to blame for their problems, the paranoid political actor convincingly provides answers; he identifies the "outside enemy." He provides a rallying cry, and the heady elixir of mob hatred against the outside enemy provides a powerful unifying force. This is the essence of the destructive charismatic leader (Post, 1986).

Thus, the ability of the paranoid political actor depends to a significant degree upon forces outside of himself. It depends upon the readiness of a significant portion of the polity to follow a paranoid, a polity which sees or can be induced to see the world in polar terms, which seeks an outside target for aggression, and which is ready to have these feelings articulated and given form. Even the most casual student of

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social history notes that there are societies, movements within societies, and historical periods that present paranoid-like characteristics, that seem particularly ripe for a paranoid leader. To varying degrees of deviance and apparent pathology, some societies have a level of suspicion and feelings of persecution higher than others. Germany in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the United States in the late 40s, the witch hysteria in Scotland of the sixteenth century, and perceptions of many extreme right—and left—organizations in the United States are all instances of this exaggerated suspiciousness and feelings of persecution. Obviously, in all cases there are historical reasons for these perceptions, and these distinctions are important. For the purpose of this study, however, the point is that entire societies or distinct subgroups within these societies are obsessed with suspicion or persecution and may also have delusions of grandiosity.

Here Hofstadter's concept of societal paranoia becomes relevant. By "paranoid style" Hofstadter (1985) refers to "qualities of heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy." (p. 3) Conspiracy is not merely seen as a major element in politics but rather is perceived by those with a paranoid style as the motive force in history. Paranoid in this usage is a style, a way of summarizing significant aspects of an era or societal grouping through a term like "baroque" or "imperialistic." The individual who is able to give shape to this inchoate sentiment may assume a leadership role. Some highly suspicious people who rise to the top are simply conforming to and articulating the beliefs of their fellows. They are often more extreme in their behavior than others or more sensitive to the perceived danger without, but the crucial difference apropos of Table II below is their political skills. Thus leaders of such groups or societies may exhibit attitudes and behavioral patterns valued in the society but in a more extreme form than is the norm. The leader represents the spirit of his people, or of his time, or of his organization. Table II represents a matrix relating the level of appeal to the environment's receptivity.

Again, three levels of appeal—transcendent, group, and self—are presented, but are here related to differences in the receptivity of the environment. Because it is the environment that is the variable, the same paranoid leader may go from a situation of low environmental receptivity to a situation of high environmental receptivity. A profound change in the social climate may permit the paranoid leader who heretofore has been essentially a prophet in the wilderness, operating either alone or with only a small group of loyal followers, to become transformed into a millenarian leader. Iran is a notable contemporary

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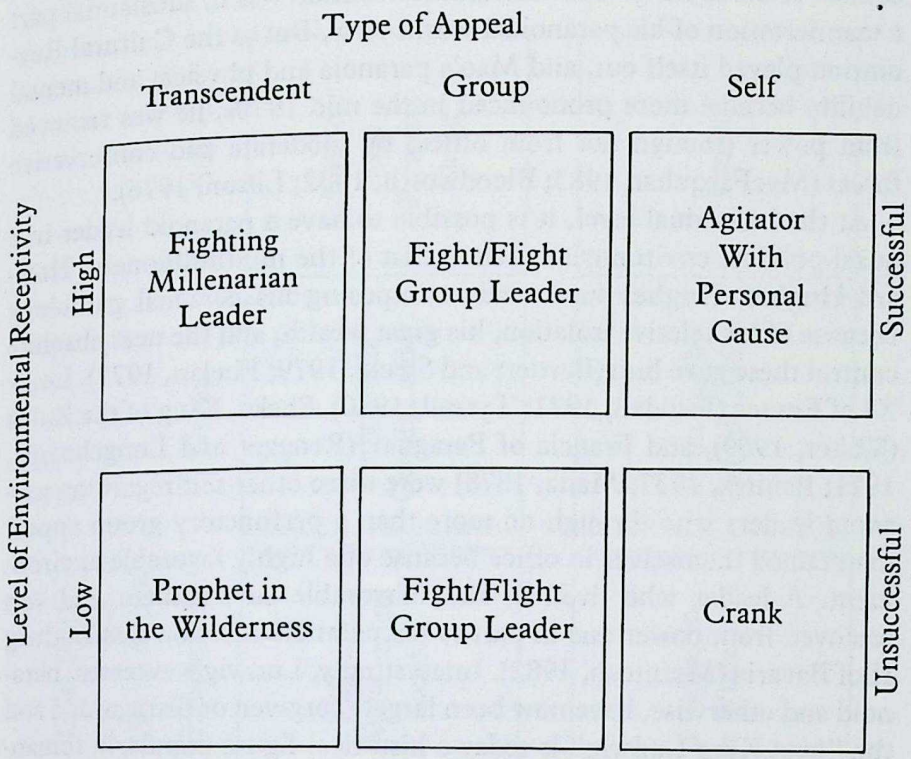
TABLE II



example. The rhetoric of Ayatollah Khomeini during his years of exile was not notably different from that which inflamed the crowds when he returned to Teheran. The difference was the societal climate. The extensive social disruption promoted by the Shah's economic dislocations and overly rapid economic expansion without a sufficiently prepared societal infrastrucure produced expectations that could not be realized. In this climate, Khomeini was able to focus the resentment of the peasants and semi-Westernized middle classes against the Shah.

Similarly, at the group level, an individual who is ahead of his time may identify a fighting issue prematurely because of his paranoid sensibility. As the perception spreads, he may then, because of his historic commitment to that attitude, be identified as a leader. Thus, he would move from being a mere nuisance to a fighting group leader. And of course the wheel may eventually turn full circle, casting him once again out of power. In the group fight/flight category, Mao Ze Dong had a non-paranoidal career, but in old age he began to show paranoidal reasoning and style. This appeal, which was unsuccessful in The Great Leap Forward of 1956, permitted him in the mid 1960s to

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build upon generational and other societal conflicts to regain effective control of his country. The Cultural Revolution was in substantial part a manifestation of his paranoidal world view. But as the Cultural Revolution played itself out, and Mao's paranoia and physical and mental debility became more pronounced in the mid 1970s, he was removed from power (though not from office) by moderate and conservative forces (MacFarquhar, 1983; Bloodworth, 1982; Lifton, 1976).

At the individual level, it is possible to have a paranoid leader in a quasi-political environment such as that of the multimillionaire Howard Hughes. Hughes succeeded in imposing his personal pathology because of his relative isolation, his great wealth, and the near absolute control these gave him (Bartlett and Steele, 1979; Phelan, 1977). Louis XI of France (Kendall, 1971; Tyrrell, 1980), Shaka, King of the Zulus (Walter, 1969), and Francia of Paraguay (Rengger and Longchamps, 1971; Benitez, 1937; Majia, 1878) were three other self-regarding paranoid leaders who through no more than a perfunctory group appeal maintained themselves in office because of a highly favorable environment. A leader who lived in an unfavorable environment and was removed from power due in part to his paranoid ideation was Ludwig II of Bavaria (McIntosh, 1982). Interestingly, Ludwig's excesses, paranoid and otherwise, have now been largely forgiven or disregarded and the "mad King Ludwig" is today a historical figure popularly romanticized around Munich.

Thus, there are two factors that create the success of a paranoid personality: to be successful, regardless of type of appeal, he must be a leader with political ability, but he must also function within a receptive environment. These two factors are combined in Table III.

The Successful Paranoid Leader and the Development of His Movement

In contrast to the reparative charismatic, as exemplified by Ataturk (Volkan, 1980), destructive charismatic leaders characteristically mobilize hatred against an outside enemy. To be effective, the destructive charismatic must have significant paranoid elements in his personality makeup. He must be able to convey with sincerity his unshakable belief that "it's not us—it's them. They are the problem, and if you will follow me, by eliminating them we can achieve our deserved place." This is the polarizing rhetoric of Hitler (see Bychowski, 1973) and many other successful dictators. But charisma is not the property of an individual; rather, it is a description of a relationship between a leader and his followers (see Post, 1985). It is the relationship between

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TABLE III

			Type of Appeal		
	Political Skill	Environment	Transcendent	Group	Self
Successful	High	Receptive	Fighting Millenarian Leader	Fight/Flight Group Leader	Agitator with Personal Cause
Unsuccessful	High	Unreceptive	Prophet in the Wilderness	Fight/Flight Group Leader	Crank
	Low	Receptive			
	Low	Unreceptive			

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the "mirror-hungry" leader who needs admiring followers to feel complete and the "ideal-hungry" followers who follow his banner, gaining strength by their association with him, submerging their own selves in a group identity. The group ethos is given form and is effectively articulated by the paranoid leader, the warfare personality described by Tucker.

We are arguing that the paranoid political actor does not create these societies or groups. Rather, these are paranoid groups seeking a paranoid political actor to articulate their feelings. Indeed, Schiffer (1973) would go so far as to say that the group creates the leader.

An important distinction must be drawn here. In order to give shape and form to these feelings of a paranoid group, one need not be paranoid. Thus a politically skilled individual can utilize the rhetoric of extremism and effectively mobilize paranoid sentiments. A paranoid-like movement will often have individuals in the leadership who are not paranoid. Gilbert (1950) has observed in *The Psychology of Leadership* that several key Nazi leaders were not paranoid by classical criteria. He characterized Goering, for example, as an opportunist who joined the Nazi Party, in his own words, "not because of the ideological stuff" but because it would afford him an opportunity for leadership, excitement, and power. We would suggest, however, that to be truly effective as a leader who mobilizes the paranoid sentiment in his group one must be able to convincingly convey belief, and there is no more effective paranoid leader than the true believer.

And, if there are doubts about the truth of the leader's message, the group provides consensual validation, so that as the movement grows, there is an internally reinforcing dynamic. And the greater the alienation of the followers and hence the greater the need to belong, the higher the premium on not doubting the paranoid leader's clarion call. Such a paranoid dynamic is regularly found in terrorist groups (Post, 1984). But without a paranoiagenic population, without a population ready to be incited, the paranoid political actor will remain a prophet in the wilderness, listened to by only his own small peculiar following.

The Successful Paranoid Leader's Self-Fulfilling Prophecy. The Creation of a Genuine Enemy from the Pseudo-Enemy

Let us consider the negative interactions of the paranoid political actor with the polity. It is indeed difficult to ignore the paranoid. The paranoid position invites—indeed requires—response from the interpersonal environment, so that the persecutory beliefs and posture become self-fulfilling. While "they" may not be against him initially, after the

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paranoid individual has hostilely interacted with those around him, "they" will be.

The individual who believes he is endangered by a conspiracy and acts aggressively so as to protect himself (and his followers) from those he believes are conspiring against him will inevitably produce a defensive response from his designated persecutors, which in turn will confirm his fears (or hopes). Thus the white demagogue who sees himself endangered by blacks out to destroy him and who attempts to defend himself by attacking before he is attacked will in effect create the very reality he fears. It will *not* be a delusion. The blacks *will* be his enemies, will be out to get him. The same dynamic is of course true for the paranoid demagogue of whatever political persuasion or color. Be the designated enemy the white race, Jews, or those committed to gun control, they must necessarily react against the delusively defensive aggression of the paranoid political actor, and in so doing provide confirmation of the dangerous reality he perceives. The motto "just because we're paranoid doesn't mean they're not out to get us" could well be revised to "Because we're paranoid and act to counter those who we believe are out to get us, they are indeed out to get us."

Paranoid Style and Ideation as an Aid to Power and as a Vulnerability to Manipulation

In addition to its appeal to a needy polity, there are other benefits to being paranoid for a political actor. As we have noted, sooner or later the paranoid will indeed be surrounded by enemies. And if his hypersuspiciousness is coupled with the power to act, while it may have horrific consequences for real and imagined enemies, the paranoid attitude may also have substantial survival benefits for the political leader. Consider Joseph Stalin, who while highly suspicious for most of his life was probably not clinically ill. His exaggerated alertness to conspiracy—appropriate in the plot-laden Kremlin—was highly adaptive and time and time again permitted him to eliminate potential rivals before they eliminated him (Tucker, 1973). At the same time, however, it created an atmosphere of fear and produced a widening circle of rivals and enemies. As Stalin's fear magnified, so too did the extent of his actions to eliminate threats to his power, witness the extent of the purges, variously estimated to be upwards of twelve million victims.

This example emphasizes the manipulable aspects of paranoia. As advisers compete for influence, the shrewd Machiavellian will recognize the paranoid leader's readiness to believe himself the victim of conspiracy and by casting doubt on the loyalty of a rival, can enhance

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his own relative position. Such was the case with Stalin's chief of secret police, Beria, who manipulated Stalin's distrustful nature to his own temporary advantage. He was eventually executed only after Stalin's death, when he lost out in a Kremlin power struggle. A generation later in China, the same thing occurred. Colleagues loyal to Mao since the Great March were humiliated and persecuted during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Mao's defensive suspiciousness had in his old age turned into a form of paranoia that played a large part in generating the Cultural Revolution (Lifton, 1968). Advisers close to Mao were able to manipulate him to gain advantage over bureaucratic rivals. This hypersuspicious dynamic points out the exquisite dilemma for the adviser to the paranoid leader. While he can on the one hand manipulate the leader's paranoia to his own advantage, he can also become imprisoned by it, for the paranoid behaves as if "He who is not totally with me is against me." Accordingly, as paranoia mounts, it becomes increasingly difficult to question, to criticize, and even to manipulate.

Summary and Conclusions

We have attempted to integrate the psychodynamics and clinical phenomena of the paranoid position with the phenomenon of the paranoid political actor. In contrast to the authoritarian personality or the Machiavellian personality as political personality types, one can not rigorously bound the paranoid political personality. For the paranoid outlook, which can have powerful consequences when combined with strong political skills and a receptive public, can be found in a broad spectrum of political actors, ranging from the essentally normal to flagrantly psychotic. The paranoid trait, characterised by excessive suspiciousness and strong reliance on the ego defense of projection, is regularly found in destructive charismatic leaders such as Hitler.

It is important to emphasize the dynamic nature of the paranoid process and the relationship between the paranoid political actor and his environment. For while we can, like a snapshot, freeze in time the paranoid political actor in his environment, there is an inherent spiralling dynamic characterizing both the relationship between the paranoid leader and his followers and that between him and his perceived enemies. This paranoid's political actions end up producing the very conditions he claims to fear. Indeed, the self-fulfilling aspect of the political paranoid actor is what most clearly distinguishes him from other political personality types such as the Democratic Personality, the Machiavellian Personality, and the Authoritarian Personality.

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While the paranoid attitude can be a compelling political force, it is only effective politically to the extent that it is perceived as within normal limits. This of course depends upon the nature of the paranoid's reference group, but to the degree that the paranoia is so extreme as to label the individual as a psychotic or beyond the pale, he will invalidate himself as a leader. The flagrant paranoid will be dismissed as "sick" or as a crank. Thus it is subtle paranoia, not identified as pathological, which is most politically efficacious and most socially dangerous.

In addition to the degree of paranoia, we have identified three interactive dimensions which must be examined in assessing the paranoid political actor: the degree of political skills, the frame of reference, and the receptivity of the polity. However politically skilled the actor, however broad his frame of reference, he is destined to be a prophet in the wilderness or a mere trouble-making nuisance or simply a crank if the political climate is not ripe. But where the highly politically skilled paranoid actor interacts with a wounded and needy political environment then there is the prospect of a powerful force, which, like Hitler's Third Reich or Khomeini's Islamic Revolution, can change history.

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Susanna Egan

Changing Faces of Heroism: Some Questions Raised by Contemporary Autobiography

The Heroic Mould

Much of the study of autobiography so far has concentrated on the major works of the past. Saint Augustine, Gibbon, Rousseau, De Quincey, Newman, Franklin, Adams—the exemplars have mostly been men, and very distinguished men at that. Whatever their personal difficulties, they received strong support for their achievements: they were, for the most part, educated members of a prosperous middle class, from whom family and society expected much. The success they enjoyed was not always of the kind that was expected, but therein lay their idiosyncracy. Most of these writers were members of a social or cultural elite and success in some form was no great surprise.

Furthermore, when they came to write their autobiographies, they were assured of an attentive audience. Even in those cases in which the audience was to be persuaded to alter its opinion of the writer, its interest was ensured. The autobiography usually arrived at the end of a distinguished career, the subject often well known. These men tended to write from the vantage point not only of old age but also of recognized achievement. They wrote, indeed, to document and explain what their readers already knew. Their perspective provided a teleological determinism whereby the autobiographer described how he ended up where we know him to be. The result, of course, is an absence of purely random events because the foreknown conclusion and the varyingly public nature of the subject's past both conspired to a selection of events whose purpose and meaning were clear.

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These autobiographers wrote, furthermore, within the context of a literature rooted in history, myth, and religion. I have discussed elsewhere the importance of religious and heroic myths as metaphors for the nineteenth-century autobiographer.[1] Suffice it to say here that autobiographers who were distinguished and successful men, members of the elite of their society or culture, providing their own perspective on material that was already fairly well known to an educated and attentive audience, found a ready language with which to render their life stories.

They could assume, for example, the value of their lives to society. However modest their manner, they made an easy connection between their stories and heroic narratives. They wrote very frequently in terms of their life journey. Wordsworth in *The Prelude* pursues Aeneas's path into the underworld. George Moore in *Hail and Farewell* becomes a new Siegfried attempting to redeem Irish art from the control of the Catholic church. They modelled dramatic changes in their lives on the conversion of Saint Paul. William Hale White, Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, Goethe, all describe a Pauline conversion that alters their lives. Newman enjoys the visitation of religious insight on three occasions of dramatic illness. The paradigm of the heroic journey serves the story of success very well; it provides a resonance for the achievement that readers already know about and it incorporates those encounters with enormous difficulty known only perhaps to the teller that serve to increase the value of the achievement and our perception of the human dignity and the effort that went into it.

These writers could also assume for themselves and their readers a rich cultural heritage that connected their experience to other renditions of similar experience. When Matthew Arnold heard the troubles of his own soul in the sound of the sea, he knew that Sophocles had felt much the same long before on the Aegean. The reference is not simply possible because Arnold and his readers had all studied Sophocles; it is also important because it enriches the experience that Arnold wishes to convey.[2] Connection with the past dignifies the present, generalizes the personal, provides value and context for what could otherwise be transient or of questionable significance. Arnold had, indeed, a range of reference that provided the very grandest definitions for all human emotions. Love and hate, grief and joy, experiences of life and death that are common to us all, are rendered enormous in the story of an Oedipus or Antigone, Hamlet or Lear. The heroic reaches beyond the everyday experience to define the outer possibilities of certain kinds of experience. No one person suffers like Oedipus or Lear, but such suf-

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fering touches the roots of all similar suffering and nourishes the language in which it can be described.

For the autobiographer with such rich resources, it is also important that the heroic paradigm transcends pain and grief, never yields to despair, providing a tale essentially of success; whatever the achievement, it is larger than life. The heroic journey is undertaken as a service to mankind and culminates in a successful return. For the nineteenth-century autobiographer, the heroic journey was a valuable metaphor capable of conveying those things that mattered both publicly and privately about his life. It provided a language for effort, service, and achievement. And it matched achievement with narrative closure. It rendered public and comprehensible much that had been private. And it was as natural, as appropriate, as Arnold's reference to Sophocles. Quite apart from the psychological imperatives governing such metaphors, they were available and of important service to men of the distinction and achievement common among autobiographers.

In brief, the autobiographers whose work has received most attention to date have been prominent men telling stories that were to some degree already familiar to a receptive audience and telling them in terms made rich and fluent by the culture in which they worked.

For a number of writers, of course, the autobiographical language and forms that made sense in the nineteenth century continue to make sense. Bertrand Russell looks back on a long and distinguished life and adduces three principles that explain everything he has ever done. Kathleen Raine makes sense of the complexities of her inner life as poet, woman, lover, in terms of enriching, encompassing myths. Edwin Muir explains his world in terms of a similar mythology. Nor is this model a poet's prerogative. Storm Jameson describes a long and dignified past as a journey in which nothing important is truly left behind but in which events achieve meaning by virtue of the teleology that journey implies. Simone de Beauvoir, so radical in her way, builds autobiography according to this well-established model. Even Richard Wright, paving the way for a radical Black literature, moves his story from the annihilation of dignified life in slavery through personal stamina and determination toward a promised land.[3] But for every one of these writers for whom the conventions make sense, we can find a rash of new voices for whom the recognized language and forms of autobiography are inadequate, need reworking, or make no sense at all.

Some New Voices

The new energy in autobiography that creative meddling with expression and form that keeps a genre, indeed any art form, alive, derives

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from other sources. As with autobiography in the past, contemporary works are closely related to other literary genres, to the literary products of religious movements—the sermon, the testament, the confession—and to the political manifesto. Exploration of such connections and influences lies beyond the scope of this present paper. The point I should like to make here is simply that much contemporary autobiography expresses at an immediate level many of the dominant concerns of our time. Its clearest voices do not come from the elite of our culture, the conventional heroes. From a far wider base of education and literacy than obtained a hundred years ago, and from a fuller recognition of the dignity inherent in every kind of human nature, we now find literary talent and a strong autobiographical impulse emerging from all walks of life. The palm has passed from white, middle class men of distinction to the Jewish victims of the Nazi holocaust, to women, blacks, homosexuals, convicts, exiles, and the terminally ill, the minorities of our culture who write precisely because of their lack of other kinds of power and their need to be heard.

The autobiographical hero, in other words, is no longer the leader of the commanding forces but an anonymous guerrilla seeking a name. In place of the heroic journey we find an act of rebellion. Right is not with the dominant, white, male, heterosexual, society but with the sufferer and protester of indignity and wrong. For minorities, the dominant society establishes the norms by which they are rejected and which they, in turn, reject. The very effort to articulate a self becomes an expression of spirit; it asserts the value of an individual life by creating its literary existence.

Works of this kind derive much strength, of course, from the various social liberation movements that have affected North American culture in particular over the past twenty years. We should also notice, however, that the essential nature of autobiography is such that each writer becomes separated from any movement in the isolation of exploring an individual life that happens to be black or female or gay or whatever. These autobiographers have more in common with each other than with the movements to which they may well belong. They have been solitary and silent for much longer than they have been vocal. In literary terms, they are heirs to Beckett's tramps whose existence is unnoticed and does not seem to matter, to Joyce's exiles forging in silence the conscience of their race, to Lawrence's disruptive but life-affirming rebels, to Orwell's helpless victims struggling against personal defeat, to Camus and the essentially modern perplexity and pride of estrangement.

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The contents of such autobiographies often emphasize the low life

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from which each work derives, and low here means not only unimportant but even depraved. Rebellion is, after all, an act of defiance, and self-assertion may need to be crude. Genet and Millett expose, flaunt, and celebrate their homosexuality, Behan the unredeemable energy of his wickedness, Abbott the antisocial violence of his brilliant and damaged personality, Cleaver the force of his black anger, and so on. We are taken back to the picaresque hero of the eighteenth-century novel, the rogue wanderer whose adventures describe the unvarnished truths of human nature. Survival depends on wit and energy. Failure means prison and the gallows. Outcasts of the social system, this brother-sisterhood of rogues defies the conventions of success and authority. For such as these, indeed, success is not a public achievement or the receipt of honour, wealth, or fame, but quite simply and continuously a courageous insistence on life.

In this sense, their anti-heroic bid for a hearing meshes with the attention given in the past few years in fiction, theatre, and film to the plight of truly silent sufferers: Peter Nicholls' *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg,* Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,* Arthur Kopit's *Wings,* or Ashley Montague's *Elephant Man,* for example, restate past attitudes and stir present sensitivity toward those trapped behind deformity. Notably, these also coincide with the literature and film fallout after Vietnam. In place of heroes, we find desperate people and extenuating human circumstances that arouse anxiety and compassion. The attention such works have received suggests a climate sympathetic to the victim and encourages belief that stories of personal endurance that affirm most urgently the wish for life will fall on ears that can hear.

Writing in Crisis

Many of these people are also writers or discover amazing literary talent in themselves by virtue of the exigencies from which they write. Whereas autobiographers have tended to find a crisis or turning point in their lives, what Starobinsky has called a "sufficient motive to write an autobiography,"[4] modern autobiographers frequently write from what Kermode has called "in the middest,"[5] their writing engendered by a crisis that is not yet resolved. Perspective and authority on the subject of a prominent life are replaced by immediate exploration of an often unnoticed life.

Sufficient motive, indeed, can make strange bedfellows. Stewart Alsop, for example, writes because he has been diagnosed as terminally ill. Facing what he calls "Uncle Thanatos," "I here came upon

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[him] a terrible sense of aloneness, of vulnerability, of nakedness, of helplessness."[6] And so he joins the company of Jack Henry Abbott who writes from prison that "No one has the right to take Jack Abbott away from Jack Abbott."[7] Kate Millett writes her "Underbelly book. The backside of writing. People who know what they're doing never tell you this."[8] She writes in part to overcome the crisis of sudden fame that threatens her integral self, in part to accept and affirm the lesbian self that dares not look in mirrors. Angela Davis writes from the "strength that comes out of an almost biological need to feel that we have something to say about the direction of our lives."[9] Resolution of one particular conflict, however, does not free her from "the same politically, economically, socially hostile world which almost every Black woman must contend with every day of her life."[10] The essential crisis of her black existence must live as long as she does. Even for those who describe a crisis that is literally past, the scars disfigure the present (Wiesel sees a corpse staring out of his eyes) or determine a distinctive present vigilance (Klein, Frankl, Wiesel all work for recognition of Jewish dignity; Kuper dedicates *Child of the Holocaust* to his children, to make sure that they know).[11]

Writing in crisis, these autobiographers are often very young. Angela Davis finds that "Writing an autobiography at my age seemed presumptuous."[12] Prompted to write by situations that will not go away, they can rarely invoke closure. "If I were nearer the end," says Alice Koller, "I'd probably have the whole matter sewed into a very tight ball. I'd be able to say: This was the problem, and this was the solution, and these were the steps that got me from there to here."[13] From "in the middest," however, she can only experiment with ways in which to alter the path of her life which is "one giant merry-go-round, circling the same trajectory endlessly."[14] Maya Angelou concludes with the birth of a son, proving that being flat-chested does not mean she is lesbian, or with her promise to a generous junkie that she will stay as he found her—nice. But the real issues that her writings raise continue to live with her, the writings being records in process, affirmations of survival so far, not of finite or final achievement.

Autobiography as Process

A casual glance through the titles of some contemporary autobiographies reveals the significance of specific context—spatial, temporal, social—to so many of these writers, and the common feeling that their writing cannot be definitive, that it is necessarily a process rather than a product. I would like to avoid here all the sparring among theories

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that such terms tend to invite. Quite apart from all discussion of autobiography as a revelation of private depths or a display of public surfaces, many modern autobiographers, who may well be concerned with both, feel an urgency to write because their individual identities are threatened with destruction within the particular circumstances in which they find themselves. Similarly, quite apart from fine theories about literature as process or as product, these autobiographies—completed, published, often very distinguished books, frequently deserving of attention as independent works of art—describe personal adventures that are not, often cannot be, complete. So Hellman writes *An Unfinished Woman,* Koller *An Unknown Woman,* or Alsop writes not simply about his illness but about his *Stay of Execution.* In each case the work must and does leave us waiting for that other shoe to drop. Angelou writes *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings,* Millett writes *Flying,* Jong *Fear of Flying.* Apart from their common evocation of Icarian images of escape, absurd ambition, and total destruction, they also attract our attention to the process, the unfinished nature of what they describe. And Angelou's cage is shared by many titles suggestive of captivity and trauma: *Child of the Holocaust, Black Boy, Night,* or *In the Belly of the Beast.* These writers are all dealing with forms of captivity or entrapment. Although they share their plight with many others and could be said to be speaking for all who are like them, the pain that they describe does not allow for abstraction. It is not grand or heroic. It is plebeian, commonplace, unrecognized, and inescapable. It is a condition of the writer's existence that has to be endured.

The record of such a struggle and the affirmation of life against enormous odds are not heroic in the old sense. These writers do not turn to the metaphor of the journey of the hero. They are Sweeney, not Agamemnon. Too often, indeed, they are the "petty men" whom the Colossus has betrayed; they have had to "peep about/To find [themselves] dishonourable graves." Their proliferating autobiographies are linked in Stone's words to the individualism and democratic pluralism that thrives specifically in America despite or even because of tensions and denials.[15] This demotic, often very popular autobiography enacts indeed a subversion of the elitism that has, with tensions and denials, made such expression necessary. Self-assertion becomes by definition rebellious.

Asserting One's Own Perspective

Erica Jong, for example, calls her writer/narrator/stand-in, Candida, an amanuensis to the Zeitgeist because she asserts her female identity

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in terms heretofore only acceptable from men.[16] Guards and law enforcers represent the elite to prison inmates, for these are the people with the power to control all perception of the writer, possibly, if he does not shout soon or loud enough, even his own. "The purpose," says Abbott, "is to mark me, to stamp across my face the mark of this beast they call prison."[17] As bright as any other boy in Mr. Ostrowski's English class, Malcolm Little discovers he should not wish to be a lawyer: " 'that's no realistic goal for a nigger.' "[18] Evading Nazi interrogation, the child Kuper enacts the same good-natured stupidity that blacks describe of themselves in their dealings with whites. Escape from danger necessitates a camouflage of identity, an anonymous blurring that can produce its own very serious problems and that may indeed become an important impetus to autobiography. At school in New York, Angela Davis promises herself never ever to wish she were white. An absolutely necessary and conscious decision, it would seem, to the survival of a black identity. Millett describes how others have made lesbians ugly until they have taken the squint of disapproval into their own eyes. The significance of seeing ourselves as others see us, or resisting such perception, replacing it with one's own, holds many and important implications for autobiography. It affects content and style. It alters the impulse and origins of autobiography.

Rousseau, Newman, Hale White, or even Mill might identify with the need that drives these autobiographers. The sharing of pain and experience, like the wish to correct impressions, or the desire for one's example to be of use, has always provided an impetus to autobiography. What we are looking at now, however, is a new and urgent expression of people who write specifically because they are not important people, because they are not expected to succeed or become famous, or because who they really are is not allowed to exist. They write, then, not heroic journeys of struggle and achievement but cries *de profundis* in the present tense. "I write with my blood," says Abbott, "because I have nothing else."[19] For this modern crop of autobiographers, writing is not a matter of explanation, apology, or clarification of public record, but entirely a matter of survival.

Making a Language

And for the exigencies of this kind of autobiography there is no given language. Lacking a literary tradition and context, the feelings and events described are conventionally private and personal. Lulled, as she puts it, by kindness and strawberries, Kate Millett talks to Doris Lessing in London about the pain and difficulty of writing about her-

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self. She is so vulnerable as a lesbian. Hers is indeed a human experience but it is not described, not permitted. It has no traditions and no language. Lessing, who has already broken some difficult ground herself, is reassuring. " 'But of course people wish to know,' " she says, and " 'you cannot be intimidated into silence. Or the silence is prolonged forever.' "[20] Lessing herself has written things that seemed hopelessly private only to discover that she has been speaking for other people. Both admire Mary McCarthy's admission of a drunken affair on a train. The effort these women make to deal publicly with the intimate aspects of their private lives, to overcome the embarrassments imposed by long-standing convention, is akin to that of the confession. Some two hundred years ago Jean-Jacques Rousseau began his *Confessions* by saying: "I have resolved on an enterprise which has no precedent, and which, once complete, will have no imitator. My purpose is to display to my kind a portrait in every way true to nature, and the man I shall portray will be myself. Simply myself."[21] So phenomenal was Rousseau's achievement that he has, of course, had hosts of imitators but not, until recently, among women. And for women he hardly provides the literary conventions that would make their task easy.

For a start, these women are not justifying themselves or their deeds. The intimate aspects of their lives to which they "confess" are not necessarily misdeeds but simply facts of life that have rarely been acknowledged in literature. They invite, as Lessing says, identification from other women, and this equates to some extent with Rousseau's plea for such identification: "Let them groan at my depravities, and blush for my misdeeds. But let . . . any man who dares, say 'I was a better man than he.' "[22] The difference, however, between justification and assertion of self needs to be emphasized. Millett is drawn to Lessing's work by her incorporation in fiction, for example, of a woman coping with her period. " 'In St. Paul,' " she says, " 'we call it the curse.' " And they smile together.[23] If women describe themselves, "simply themselves," as Rousseau put it, they cannot ignore the facts of their lives that are so closely linked to their energies, their human relationships, their feelings. Unlike the misdeeds to which Rousseau confesses, female sexuality does not seek pardon, simply a language that will enable the autobiographer to tell her story. It is this language that modern autobiographers are struggling to create.

"The reason why I don't want to write this," says Lessing's Anna Wulf after another black line across the page in her black notebook, the writer's notebook, "is because I have to fight to write about sex. Extraordinary how strong this prohibition is."[24] Protected by the cam-

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ouflage of fiction, Jong's Fanny Hackabout-Jones treats her problems more humourously:

> The Bearing of a Babe puts a Woman thro' as many Metamorphoses of Mood as the pale Moon hath Phases; and in each of these Phases I wrote—tho' to say the Truth, I ne'er wrote of Womanhood or bearing Babes. No, I wrote of Imaginary Kingdoms, Grecian Shepherds, Roman Warriors, and Persian Pashas. Who, I wonder'd, would wish to know of bearing Babes? Why, no one! Did Mr. Alexander Pope write of bearing Babes? Did Dean Swift? Or Mr. Addison, or Mr. Steele? Did Boileau or La Rochefoucauld? Did Virgil or Horace? Nay, nay a thousand Times nay! Why then the very Act must be neither a fitting nor correct Subject for my Quill; for if Mr. Pope found it not correct, and if Mr. Addison found it not correct, how should it be Literature at all?[25]

The novel we read, of course, has nothing to do with Grecian shepherds or Roman warriors but everything to do with a rich assortment of female experiences including not only childbearing but also many mutations of the roles of daughter, mother, wife, sister, mistress, whore, and witch. It focuses on a woman's world, her story, and her life. And it is for this, as for lesbianism, that there has been no tradition and no language. " 'Tell me,' " Millett says to Vita, " 'are my people, the ones in the book, Celia, Fumio, Miriam, are they subject fit for writing? Tell me, is it possible?' But she will not. Cannot. So we drink up and go home."[26]

Problems of Identity

Jong and Millett have other and more recent precedents for full exposure than Rousseau in the writings of Joyce and Lawrence, Miller, or Roth or Genet, and these are important because they open new possibilities for narration of intimate experience and for the presentation of a new being in modern literature whose mind and soul are inextricably connected to the body. They can borrow from a significant (albeit white, male) innovation that dignifies the private and the absurd into the communicable and important.

While women and homosexuals need to be explicit about sex in order to be clear about themselves, a language that allows value to the physical body is important also to the black autobiographer whose life or identity are endangered precisely because of physical appearance, or to the prison inmate who is stripped of human dignity in so far as that depends upon appearances, and who is constrained by the close connection between mental and physical endurance, or to the terminally ill patient who can no longer fade into beatitude with Beth or Little

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Nell but who must acknowledge the pain and value of this one body in this one life, or to the Jew who has faced extermination in numbers and ways more appropriate to cockroaches than to human beings. For these autobiographers it is important that readers identify not only with the mind but also with the body, that we climb into their alien skin. Our identification is sought not by the romantic hunter but by the frantic victim with whom, in repeated anecdote and metaphor, these writers identify.[27]

So if Jong's detailed sexual exploits look back to Leopold Bloom on the privy in Eccles St., she is also expressing a physical consciousness that is important to all these "underbelly" writers in different ways. Her Isadora considers "The History of the World Through Toilets" as an epic poem. In *How To Save Your Own Life* she elaborates on the value to the historian of the crudely physical; beyond earthiness and intimacy that are both uniquely individual and common to us all, our bodies are maps that chart our progress of survival. She thinks of telling the story of her life through the scars on her body. She would describe the marks on her flesh, the pain she suffered, the person with whom she shared that pain, the healing that was attempted, of what kind, and by whom.

Such attention to the physical, to the presence of the body, roots the modern autobiographer, like the modern writer in general, in a cultural context.[28] It originates in the importance of appearances to others. It deals with surfaces in order to realize depths. These physical surfaces, I suggest, are crucial to the autobiographer whose physical identity is threatened. I wonder whether these autobiographers do not also look back to Apuleius, to Gulliver, to Alice in Wonderland, or Pinocchio, to all the characters who have mocked, satirized, and grieved about the human condition and about specific cultural conditions by adopting physical distortions that make their subject conspicuous and vulnerable. Such distortion moves out of the realm of satiric entertainment because of the intimate identification demanded by the kind of fiction, theatre, and film mentioned earlier, or by Jack Henry Abbott's final claim: "If society has the right to do with me what it has done (and is still doing), which society *does* have, then I have the right, at least, to walk free at some time in my life even if the odds are by now overwhelming that I may not be as other men."[29] Jack Kuper as a small, louse-ridden vagabond, must be wary even when welcomed to food and shelter, lest his circumcised penis reveal his identity as a Jew and expose him to danger. Young Malcolm Little conks his reddish hair and adopts aggression as his mode of defence. Chester Himes feels

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good that people do not have to hate him because he is black; he has given them plenty of other reasons.[30]

The Search for Solutions

Satire depends upon degrees of objectivity that are neither possible nor, indeed, desirable for an autobiographer, but the residue is there, the personal qualities included in the range of satire's ingredients, bitterness and a very common tendency toward ideology. Gunn points to the similarity of impulses that create ideology and autobiography: "the problem of autobiography," she writes, "lies in the threat of ideology which dogs all narrative in its compulsion toward wholes."[31] Stone suggests that ideology is "as basic as myth in defining autobiographical acts and placing them in cultural context."[32] Ideology, of course, does not describe, like classical autobiography, what has happened. Rather, it represents an energetic impulse of survival into the future in order to describe what, after the present trauma, may become.

It is natural and commonplace that underprivileged, abused, or threatened people should seek not just consolation but also adequate solutions for their hurt in ideas. Black slaves were sure that they, like the ancient Jews, would cross the river of Jordan and take possession of the promised land. Speaking as a modern autobiographer, however, Claude Brown, nimble on his feet because survival is a daily matter, asks where one runs to when one is already in the promised land. Identifying with Christ on the cross (he describes his upside-down crucifixion and torture in a police station) Chester Himes sees no redemption through the suffering of the victim, only the sadistic brutality of the executioners. If the old myths seem to fail for the modern situation, the modern autobiographer turns them upside-down in order to make a new kind of sense and to explore ideas for redemption both of self and of all fellow sufferers. Ideology invites community, is essentially different from private and idiosyncratic faith. Its very nature implies the sharing and spreading of some theory or vision. Like so much contemporary autobiography, it belongs specifically in its social, worldly context and helps to distinguish the modern, demotic autobiography from its classical, heroic predecessor.

Discussing Hamlet's suffering as self-indulgent and elitist, Jack Henry Abbott turns energetically to communism. Similarly, Angela Davis, returning from privileged studies in Europe in order to be part of the Black Liberation movement, believes "that in order to achieve its ultimate goals, the Black Liberation struggle would have to become a part of a revolutionary movement, embracing all working people."[33]

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"I was like an explorer," she writes, "who returns to his homeland after many years, with precious bounty and no one to give it to. I believed my energy, my commitment, my convictions were the treasure I had accumulated, and I looked high and low for a way to spend it. I roamed the campus, examined the bulletin boards, read the newspapers, talked to everyone who might know: Where are my people?"[34] Running underground after the Marin County Courthouse revolt and the death of Jonathan Jackson, she is finally caught and held in the Women's House of Detention in New York City. "I fought the tendency to individualise my predicament. . . . I paced faster across the holding cell. I walked with the determination of someone who has someplace very important to go."[35]

Similarly, Eldridge Cleaver begins by trying to save himself: "I had to seek out the truth and unravel the snarled web of my motivations. I had to find out who I am and what I want to be, what type of man I should be, and what I could do to become the best of which I was capable."[36] Even in this process of self-exploring for personal salvation, however, Cleaver thinks of himself as having strayed "not so much from the white man's law as from being human." His essays and letters move outward continuously as if in concentric circles from his personal investigation to include his fellow beings. "I understood," he writes, "that what had happened to me had also happened to countless other blacks and it would happen to many, many more."[37] He finds his redeeming vision in the Muslim faith as preached by Malcolm X. Stunned by the death of Malcolm X and grieving, Cleaver's determination not to let this vision escape remains communal, not personal, the proletarian sharing of effort to remove suffering that is not self-inflicted: "We shall have our manhood," he promises for himself and for all black men. "We shall have it or the earth will be leveled by our attempts to gain it."[38]

Malcolm X epitomizes the redemptive value of the vision that transcends immediate and abject circumstances. "[N]o one can change more completely," he says, "than the man who has been at the bottom. I call myself the best example of that."[39] His autobiography is extraordinary indeed for its juxtaposition of sordid facts and the ferocious pursuit of amazing potential. At its simplest, his potential is precisely for vision. Betrayed by Elijah Muhammad, Black Muslim leader of the Nation of Islam, he moves on to a more personal and far more generous concept of what the future could hold. Not unlike the Women's Liberation movement discovering that men, too, are trapped and limited by male chauvinism, Malcolm X turns from blacks to the brotherhood of all people. At home in the Muslim world, "with nothing but

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the sky overhead [he] lay awake amid sleeping Muslim brothers and . . . learned that pilgrims from every land—every color, and class, and rank; high officials and the beggar alike—all snored in the same language."[40]

In part modern autobiographers tend toward ideology because of their need to escape from their present-tense wretchedness. They are writing from the middle of their problem and reaching for a solution that could be effective in future time. Gunn's connection between autobiography and ideology makes sense not only in the tendency of both to make things whole but also in the desire for *autos* to belong in a community, for the relevance of a *bios* that can be made useful to others, and for the value of a *graphe* that may even effect changes.[41]

It is this sense of timeliness and relevance that helps Millett to overcome her fears of being trivial. She is not merely answering the frantic question of her youth, whispered to her reflection in the glass: " 'Are you queer?' "[42] "I have borne this label so long it is a victory to embrace it, a way of life accepted."[43] She also envisages and may help to create a society in which no one belongs to anyone else and no one is a freak. Once again, the autobiographer's personal salvation leads to an attempt to reach others. Protesting Sydney's cynicism, she says they are not merely a network, all sleeping together, but " 'a new way to live.' "[44] A code of free love that separates sex from ownership or bondage extends beyond the problems of being lesbian. Is there a taint of old-fashioned attitudes, Millett wonders, in her desire for Claire, who is blonde? She is tormented by ritual prostitution fantasies. She must avoid the traditional pecking orders and make love to the old and the young, the ugly and the gorgeous indiscriminately.

She struggles, too, to overcome the fear that she inherits from her mother, and to deliver her mother, the first wronged woman, into the new world. (Celia grows tumours instead of babies to appease her mother.) Vita, serving and needing to be valued, is another mother figure, wronged yet again by the inadequacy and frustration of Millett's love for her. Millett pleads with her mother to read and understand. Her mother has been a successful saleswoman. Her photograph, in her sequined spectacles, appeared in the trade magazine as "Man of the Year."[45] Millett is not her mother's daughter for nothing. She too is a saleswoman and will promote her vision even to those who do not want to receive it because she rises above her personal struggle to speak for lesbians, who are unacceptable, and for women, who are repeatedly wronged.

Driven by the need to identify and accept themselves as they are, these modern autobiographers develop or work within an ideology that

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connects them to others who are also oppressed and that opens a future more acceptable than the past. To the kind of suffering that these writers describe, a suffering inflicted in one form or another by the world around them, the autobiographical response seems very often to be an individual effort to act.

Victor Frankl recounts his experiences in concentration camps as a mere prelude to his system of logotherapy entitled *Man's Search for Meaning.* Because he has endured so much, he has the spiritual strength to help others to find meaning and value even in their worst experiences. His work is both autobiography, guidance, and a record that may protect his fellowmen from maybe the worst outrage of all, public indifference. Similarly, Elie Wiesel describes the smell of burning flesh and the flames at Birkenau, reception centre for Auschwitz, as the flames that consumed his faith, murdered his god, and turned his soul to dust. Yet he must write. Implicitly, his writing is likened to the stories of Moche the Beadle, who is expelled as a foreigner from Wiesel's home town of Sighet but returns to tell his stories of horror and atrocity, to warn them all. He is considered mad. He has forced himself through hardships to journey back to tell them, and no one will listen. Mme. Schächter is also considered mad when she screams in the cattle car about approaching fire. She is subdued and silenced because what she sees and feels is too much for her fellow passengers to bear. Yet Wiesel writes and is, indeed, active as head of the US Holocaust Commission, for which role he was awarded the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize. Even though the Jews of Sighet continued to smile when Moche the Beadle warned them of impending disaster, even though the frightened Jews in the cattle car refused to acknowledge Mme. Schächter as a visionary, Wiesel is compelled to write and to work in ways that make his life a form of service. In part, he must share the feeling expressed by Jack Kuper's dedication to *Child of the Holocaust,* in Millett's appeal to her mother, or in Abbott's letters to Mailer—a need for others to understand. In part, these autobiographers connect the value of their life, and the value of their autobiography to the possibility for change which is the revolutionary hope at the heart of all such ideology. Working toward a possible future is closely connected to the value denied to the individual existence in the real world that the autobiography is written both to define and to assert.

Conclusion

A generalized survey of this kind poses one serious and inherent problem: it appears to blur the obvious distinctions between individuals

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(surely Stewart Alsop and Jack Henry Abbott inhabit different worlds?) and between types (are not blacks and gays and women and Jews more different from each other than they are alike, and do not the lives within each group raise issues exclusive to that group?). Generalizations such as I have been making throughout this paper may raise at least as many questions as they answer.

Similarly, a glance at a mixed bag of post-war autobiographies precludes analysis of the social and cultural history "in the middest" of which these lives are lived, these stories written. It cannot take account of the influences from literature and tradition past or present of which these texts are a part. By virtue of looking briefly at one particular genre at one particular time, we blur the landscape, perceive a truth but perceive it out of focus. Trick photographers do this; melon skin or cotton wool photographed through a microscope are so unrecognizable that the viewer must work hard to understand what he is seeing and almost certainly turns to the (upside-down) captions for relief. But our perception of these objects has been altered and renewed.

Just as the photographer does not pretend to give the whole picture, so this discussion does not begin to deal with the complex issues of contemporary autobiography. Rather, it points to a most unlikely series of relationships in order to suggest some of the ways in which the men and women of our time are evolving for our time some new emphases in autobiographical literature.

If we look back from this perspective to the heroes and the heroic feats of conventional autobiography, we can certainly recognize that much recent autobiography is using new voices and expressing new concerns. It demonstrates its living relationship to other literary genres and its grounding in the temporal, cultural context of today. In these respects, because "the times they are a-changing," none of us has a perspective or a tidy sense of closure. It can only be as a hypothetical gesture, then, that I wonder whether the heroes of old have really departed. Have they not, rather, chosen new grounds on which to provide their service to humanity? Are they not rewriting the old myths in new ways?

The Romantic traveller returned to his welcoming society bearing the gift he had sought of poetry, religious faith, or the philosophic clarity to serve society in humanitarian ways even from the devastating void of atheism. The modern hero and heroine, on the other hand, must salvage the wreck of their identities from their oppressors. Creating the conscience of their race, they are the active creators of the society that could welcome them. Often their creative energy becomes

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ideological in quality. Always it exists to assert the importance, the value, the basic vibrancy of these insignificant because undervalued lives. It manifests itself in the autobiographers' constant resistance to the damaging perception of others and in the fertility with which they evolve new methods of making themselves whole, immediate, and worthy of our serious consideration. As they wrestle with the means whereby they can transform their often wretched lives into literature, do they not become the heroes and heroines of our time? Of the nuclear era? Of this modern period on which we cannot yet look back to appreciate how much they have achieved?

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NOTES

1. Susanna Egan, *Patterns of Experience in Autobiography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984). For a different and interesting reading of many of the same materials and ideas, see also Avrom Fleishman, *Figures of Autobiography: The Language of Self-writing in Victorian and Modern England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).
2. Arnold belongs to the discussion here less because his poem is autobiographical than because of his championship of that culture out of which the most prominent autobiographers of the time were writing.
3. Bertrand Russell, *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell* (London: Bantam Books, 1968); Kathleen Raine, *Farewell Happy Fields, The Land Unknown,* and *The Lion's Mouth* (London: Hamilton, 1973, 1975, & 1977); Edwin Muir, *An Autobiography* (London: Hogarth, 1954); Storm Jameson, *Journey from the North: Autobiography of Storm Jameson* 2 vols. (London: Collins & Harvill Press, vol. 1, 1969, vol. 2, 1970); Simone de Beauvoir, *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (trans., James Kirkup. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1959); Richard Wright. *Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth* (New York: Harper & Row, 1937).
4. Jean Starobinski, "The Style of Autobiography," trans. Seymour Chatman, in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical,* ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 78.
5. Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theories of Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), passim.
6. Stewart Alsop, *Stay of Execution: A Sort of Memoir* (N.Y.: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1973), p. 31.
7. Jack Henry Abbott, *In the Belly of the Beast: Letters from Prison* (N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1982), p. 27.
8. Kate Millett, *Flying* (N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), p. 78.
9. *Angela Davis: An Autobiography* (N.Y.: Random House, 1974), p. 317.
10. Ibid., p. 353.
11. Elie Wiesel, *Night,* trans. Stella Rodway (N.Y.: Hill & Wang, 1960); Gerda Weiss-

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man Klein, *All But My Life* (N.Y.: Hill & Wang, 1957); Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy* (N.Y.: Washington Square Press, 1963); Jack Kuper, *Child of the Holocaust* (Toronto: General Publishing Co., Ltd., 1967).

12. Davis, p. ix.
13. Alice Koller, *An Unknown Woman: A Journey to Self-discovery* (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1981), p. 120.
14. Ibid., p. 107.
15. Albert E. Stone, *Autobiographical Occasions and Original Acts: Versions of American Identity from Henry Adams to Nate Shaw* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), p. 9.
16. Erica Jong, *How To Save Your Own Life* (N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1977), p. 12.
17. Abbott, p. 44.
18. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X,* with the assistance of Alex Haley (N.Y.: Grove Press, Inc., 1966), p. 36.
19. Abbott, p. 44.
20. Millett, p. 358.
21. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions,* trans. J. M. Cohen (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1953), p. 17.
22. Ibid.
23. Millett, p. 357.
24. Doris Lessing, *The Golden Notebook* (London: Granada, 1973), p. 468.
25. Erica Jong, *Fanny: Being the True History of the Adventures of Fanny Hackabout-Jones* (Scarborough, Ont.: The New American Library of Canada Ltd., 1980), p. 315.
26. Millett, p. 172.
27. This metaphor of the hunt is worth exploring. It recurs in autobiographies of the past with the hero as hunter and seems to be common in contemporary autobiographies, with the writer assuming the role of victim.
28. Janet Varner Gunn, in *Autobiography: Toward a Poetics of Experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982). Fleishman and Stone make this claim for autobiography in general. My work has described certain narrative patterns that seem to override any particular cultural context, but I could never argue that such a context is irrelevant. Indeed, my point here is to emphasize its influence on contemporary autobiography.
29. Abbott, p. 198.
30. Chester Himes, *The Quality of Hurt: The Autobiography of Chester Himes,* vol. 1 (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972), p. 301.
31. Gunn, p. 119.
32. Stone, p. 16. See also G. Thomas Couser, *American Autobiography: The Prophetic Mode* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1979); and Thomas P. Doherty, "American Autobiography and Ideology," in *The American Autobiography: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1981), pp. 95–108.
33. Davis, pp. 150–51.
34. Ibid., p. 152.
35. Ibid., p. 28.

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36. Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice* (N.Y.: Dell Publishing, 1968), p. 15.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 61.
39. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X,* p. 261.
40. Ibid., p. 344.
41. See James Olney, "Autobiography and the Cultural Moment," in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical,* pp. 3–27.
42. Millett, p. 103.
43. Ibid., p. 97.
44. Ibid., p. 157.
45. Ibid., p. 327.

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PAUL JAY

What's The Use? Critical Theory and the Study of Autobiography

In recent years the study of autobiography, and autobiographical fiction and poetry, has moved from the obscure borders of criticism to center stage. Where only a few years ago there was very little critical literature on autobiographical works there is now an abundance of it.[1] As we have witnessed the growth of research in, and criticism of, autobiographical literature, so too have we witnessed the development of an ever-increasing body of theoretical work pertaining to the study of such literature. These theoretical works can be divided, if somewhat schematically, into two categories: theoretical studies of autobiography generated in and by a study of autobiographical literature itself, and theoretical studies of autobiography generated by theories imported from outside the study of autobiography and applied to it. It is to this latter body of work that I want to turn my attention—to a discussion of why critics interested in a range of what I will somewhat loosely call "post-structuralist" theories are increasingly turning their attention to discussions of autobiographical literature, and to an assessment of the potential uses of such theories for the study of autobiography.[2]

Ever since the publication in 1960 of Roy Pascal's *Design and Truth in Autobiography,* scholars and critics working on autobiographical texts have grappled with methodological and theoretical problems which the study of such texts always raises.[3] Early on, the key terms in Pascal's title—"design" and "truth"—tended to determine the focus of such theoretical work. That is, essays on the method and theory of autobiographical studies generated by a study of autobiography tended at the outset to focus on broad questions either about genre or the "truth value" (or status) of autobiographical works. I have in mind

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here the work of such critics as Francis R. Hart, William L. Howarth, Alfred Kazin, and Barrett J. Mandel, critics primarily (though not always exclusively) interested in defining or "anatomizing" the forms of autobiography.[4] Both Hart and Howarth, for instance, are interested in their early essays in identifying and sorting out various kinds of autobiographical texts, an activity which must necessarily precede the work of defining autobiography as a literary genre. But Hart sensibly warns that "the evaluative question of formal consistency and integrity provokes theorists to specific judgments (about genre) that are conventional and premature." Such judgments, he argues, need to be carefully considered "first in the light of the wide plurality of mimetic and formal value of which autobiography has proved capable."[5] With his healthy suspicion that its plurality of mimetic forms may in fact make the "genre" of autobiography impossible to define and categorize, Hart's anatomy of kinds of autobiography is guided by the principle that "rather than deducing fixed expectations from distinctions of intentional 'kind,' we should try to see how—why—with what effect distinct intentions evolve and interplay in individual autobiographies."[6] We should note here that Hart anticipates a central "problematic" of post-structuralist literary theory, that of intentionality. In questioning the value of categorizing autobiographical works by the formal "intentions" of their authors, and by suggesting that those intentions "evolve and interplay" in ways over which the author may have no conscious control (we can find no authorial subject in Hart's sentence), Hart in his own way has "deconstructed" the opposition between "intended" and "unintended" self-representation. His focus is on the *play* of intended and unintended significations in an autobiographical text, and it is just this play which in his view renders the anatomizing of autobiography so difficult.

Howarth, nevertheless, wanting to promote Hart's kind of anatomizing approach to the question of genre, insists that autobiography is "self-portraiture," and that it has identifiable "elements" and "principles." The "elements" Howarth identifies in autobiography link it, as a literary form, inextricably to fiction: "character," "technique," and "theme." Thus his "elements" produce autobiographical works broadly characterized as "Autobiography as Oratory," "Autobiography as Drama," and "Autobiography as Poetry."[7] The problem here should be readily apparent: Howarth's "as" construction is a kind of pivot which, once put in motion, can never be stopped. If there is autobiography *as* A, B, and C, then why not as D, E, and F, etc.; why not Autobiography as Novel, Autobiography as Non-fiction prose,

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Autobiography as Letter, and, as Harold Bloom has recently championed in *Agon,* Autobiography as Criticism? Howarth's attempt to grapple with defining autobiography as a genre, like Hart's—but in a different way—ends in a conundrum.

Both Hart and Howarth are very much interested in their essays in the art and style of autobiographical works, which is why their categorizations end up moving them closer to aligning autobiography with prose fiction than defining its generic characteristics. Their interest in art and style in autobiographical literature, however, is shared by another broad group of theorists of autobiography, including Kazin, Jean Starobinski, Louis A. Renza, James Olney, and John Sturrock.[8] In their collective theoretical works on autobiographical literature there is an interest in both the aesthetic design of autobiographical literary works—qualities of style, techniques, and narrative form—and in the activity and function of autobiographical composition. The interest here is less in generating a theory of generic form than in using literary theory to analyze works of literature which happen to be autobiographical. Not that their autobiographical nature is ignored by these critics. It is simply that the critic's focus is on the literary work as a literary work, rather than as a specimen which might help define a literary form. The theoretical interests of these critics clearly have roots in the fundamental questions raised by Pascal, but here the sophistication and complexity of argument is clearly more incisive. We should also note in this regard important book-length studies of autobiography which are partly theoretical in nature, principally James Olney's *Metaphors of Self,*[9] Elizabeth Bruss' *Autobiographical Acts,*[10] and most recently, William Spengemann's *The Forms of Autobiography*[11] and Avrom Fleishman's *The Language of Autobiography.*[12]

The theoretical works touched on above serve only to suggest the wide range of such works as they have evolved in the last two decades. I avoid treating this body of work at much length in order to turn to my principal topic, the ever increasing application of structuralist and post-structuralist critical theories to the study of autobiography, and autobiographical fiction and poetry. We can date the beginning of such applications from the publication in 1974 of Jeffrey Mehlman's *A Structural Study of Autobiography: Proust, Leiris, Sartre, Lévi-Strauss.*[13] Mehlman's was the first book published in America to apply in a sustained way concepts from contemporary French theory to the study of autobiographical texts. Since the publication of Mehlman's book such studies have been produced at an ever-increasing pace: Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man, Louis Marin, Rodolphe Gasché, and

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Eugene Vance, to name a few, have all recently taken a deconstructionist's interest in "autobiographical" literature.

"Autobiographical" must here be put in quotation marks, since the variety of texts treated by these critics is somewhat baffling. While Vance, for example, invokes Derrida's *Of Grammatology* in his discussion of a work familiar in studies of autobiography, Augustine's *Confessions,* Derrida himself, in "Coming Into Ones Own," presents a sustained and detailed reading of Freud's *Beyond The Pleasure Principle* as an autobiographical work.[14] Vance's discussion of the *Confessions* focuses on what he calls its "grammar of selfhood" and is a straightforward example of the importation of Derrida's deconstructive grammatology into the realm of autobiographical studies. Vance uses Augustine to show how the "I" of an autobiographical work, "rather than being a signifier [such as the word 'book'] designating a specific substance whose nature is more or less fixed," is in fact "a special signifier whose referent necessarily varies," since "the identity of the speaker-as-referent will change depending upon the specific code of his discourse."[15] Here we have a more sophisticated version of Hart's earlier distinction between "distinct" intentions and those which evolve in the "interplay" of representation. Vance wants to clarify the referential status of the subject (the "I") in an autobiographical work. His central point is that that "I" is not *fixed* in relationship to its author, and that its identity is generated less in relationship to Augustine's than in relationship to the "specific code" of the *Confessions'* "discourse." From the vantage point of Derrida's *Of Grammatology* Vance finds in Augustine not a self but a grammatology of one.

De Man's interest is much the same in his "Autobiography as Defacement."[16] With Derrida, de Man chooses an unlikely text, Wordsworth's *Essays on Epitaphs.* As a deconstructive rhetorician, de Man attempts to illustrate how the subject in an autobiography is defined less by its history (i.e., its author's past) than by its status as a linguistic referent, a trope. In his reading of Wordsworth's *Essays,* "death" becomes "a displaced name for a *linguistic* predicament," one in which Wordsworth's discourse of self-restoration disfigures, as it seeks to figure, the poet.[17] De Man's pun on "disfigure" in the essay is elaborate; it carries the burden of his argument that the figure of the author in an autobiographical work is a literary figuration, and that its central "predicament" is that in the act of self-figuration (autobiographical composition) the biographical self is displaced by a trope: it is "disfigured," and in the process, "dies," so that literary self-representation becomes for de Man the creation of a kind of epitaph.

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The point of view taken toward autobiography in the work of Vance, Derrida, and de Man—deconstructive in its theoretical orientation—has more recently been urged on critics of autobiographical literature in two review articles in *diacritics,* one by Michael Ryan, the other by Candace Lang. Lang's essay (I shall be turning to Ryan's below), "Autobiography in the Aftermath of Romanticism," constitutes a sustained criticism of the "romantic" (i.e., theoretically unsophisticated) orientation of the criticism of autobiographical literature produced in the last two decades.[18] Like both Vance and de Man, Lang is interested in the "problematic" status of the subject, the "I," in an autobiographical work, interested, that is, in the extent to which recent critics of autobiography have failed to acknowledge and treat such a problematic.

Her central critique of the work of such critics (principally James Olney, William Spengemann, and the critics whose work appears in Olney's *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*) is that they persistently "function in the romantic mode" when it comes to their working conception of a "self."[19] For Lang, this romantic mode is characterized by a number of assumptions made highly questionable by post-structuralists: that "each individual possesses a unified, unique, ineffable self," that "the authentic self" is "pre-cultural," that it possesses "an originary universal human nature" which makes "possible communication among individuals" which is "truer" and "more immediate" than "rational discourse," and that the "self is a pre-linguistic entity" which can "dissimulate itself *behind* linguistic personae which it arbitrarily creates in order to safeguard its purity and maintain its autonomy."[20] Her list, it will be seen, is one of privileged terms, terms which recur again and again in the language of post-structuralism. It is precisely their important role in autobiographical literature which makes such literature particularly interesting to critics working in a deconstructive mode, and it is precisely their important role in the *criticism* of that literature which makes such criticism interesting to post-structuralists. This being the case, Lang ends her essay with the prediction that "further exploration" of autobiography "will constitute an important chapter of post-structuralist theory."[21]

Before turning to a brief overview of how that chapter might read, we need to linger a moment and ask why structuralist and post-structuralist theorists and critics have turned their attention to autobiographical literature.[22] One obvious answer is simply that the serious critical study of autobiography has come of age exactly in the age of structuralism and deconstruction (and in that of the new French Freud

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and Feminism). It is in a way simply the bad luck of autobiographical studies, or the good luck of critical theory (or vice-versa; this all depends upon your point of view), that their development has been simultaneous. Beyond this temporal intersection, however, we can identify a kind of intrinsic attraction between the nature of autobiographical writing and the concerns and procedures of post-structuralism. For one thing, recent literary theory has been generally preoccupied with examining the nature of literature's *referential* status —preoccupied, that is, with the asking of hard questions about the relationship between literary representations and the things represented by them. To recall the older terms for such probings, recent theorists have focused their attention on the extent to which meaning and reference in a literary work are generated by *intrinsic,* rather than by *extrinsic,* kinds of significations. What better laboratory for such delicate probings than the ostensibly "factual" referentiality of an autobiographical work, which purports to be a sustained revelation about a life lived wholly outside and before the text which represents it? If the referential waters here are muddy, so the reasoning goes, then they must be muddy everywhere. De Man writes in this regard that

> Autobiography seems to depend on actual and potentially verifiable events in a less ambivalent way than fiction does. It seems to belong to a simpler mode of referentiality . . . But are we so certain that autobiography depends on reference, as a photograph depends on its subject? . . . We assume that life *produces* the autobiography as an act produces its consequences, but can we not suggest, with equal justice, that the autobiographical project may itself produce and determine the life and that whatever the writer *does* is in fact governed by the technical demands of self-portraiture and thus determined, in all its aspects, by the resources of his medium?[23]

De Man's deconstructive perspective—deconstructive because it seeks to invalidate the easy opposition between referential and fictional discourse—has the effect of folding autobiography over into the category of creative literature, and it allows for no real distinction between autobiography *per se* and fictional autobiography, at least as it might be based on the "simpler" referential operations of the former. Since the "life" in an autobiographical work is produced and determined by the technical demands of self-portraiture, its referential qualities are too highly mediated *by* those demands to be deemed reflective in any simple or pure way of a "life" outside of or prior to the "life" produced in and by the text embodying it. In de Man's view, then, both the mean-

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ing and the subject in an autobiographical work are generated rhetorically and tropologically, rather than historically. It is precisely the character of autobiography—its seemingly privileged status as a referential mode of writing—which captures his deconstructive critical eye. "Autobiography," that is, becomes for him a kind of laboratory for demonstrating in an ultimate kind of way the crux of a literary theory about referentiality generated outside the realm of autobiographical studies *per se.*

Another, related, reason why post-structuralist theorists are turning their attention to autobiographical works is that they provide fertile ground for an examination of the role and status of the "subject" in literary discourse. We have already seen this to be the main thrust of Lang's critique of criticism of autobiographical works—that such criticism has not paid nearly enough attention to such an examination. Both the articles by Vance and de Man which we have been discussing exemplify a point of view about the self and its representation in autobiographical literature which constitutes a "post-Romantic" treatment like that called for by Lang.

Informed variously by Nietzsche, Freud, Lacan, Barthes, and Derrida, the post-structuralist subject is a function of the language and culture which constitutes its sense of "being," and that "being" is thought of not in terms of a spiritual unity but in terms of a multiple, contradictory, and diffracted construction. Just as this formulation of the self constitutes a deconstruction of the "Romantic" self outlined by Lang, so the post-structuralist turns his or her attention to autobiographical works in order to deconstruct that same self as it is constituted there. Assuming, like Vance, that the self is ordered by a kind of "grammar," or like de Man, that the word "self" (or "I") is a metaphorical rather than a referential construction, the post-structuralist turns to autobiographical self-construction precisely to chart *in a text* the creation of such a grammar or the workings of such a metaphor. Thus de Man's conception of a "self"—post-Romantic by Lang's definition—informs at every turn his conception of the subject in an autobiographical work; it is not a unified psychological representation whose "essence" or "identity" is fixed prior to the language which gives it being, but, rather, its essence and identity is constituted in and by the language which produces it. A critic like de Man, then, will not abandon the older critical tendency to "read" autobiographical works as searches for self-identity but will simply turn his attention to that search as it takes place in the linguistic, rhetorical, and tropological workings of the text. He is, that is, less interested in the text's recount-

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ing of a search for identity asserted to have taken place outside and before its composition than in the search for and construction of identity as it takes place within the text and during the moments of its composition.

Thus two very broad theoretical questions—one surrounding the problem of referentiality, the other surrounding the problem of the role and status of the subject in literary discourse—constitute in good measure the intrinsic attraction of autobiographical works for poststructuralist theorists. The intersection of such theoretical problems with the problems inherent in autobiographical writing, it should be noted, is nowhere more apparent than in Roland Barthes's *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes,* an autobiographical work whose content is in large part devoted to theoretical matters pertaining to the very form Barthes is using to communicate them. Having discussed Barthes's book in this regard elsewhere,[24] I pass over it to the second of the two questions with which I began this essay: if it is clear that autobiographical works provide a kind of ideal laboratory for the analysis of current theoretical problems in literary studies, what can we observe about the uses of contemporary theory for the study of autobiographical works themselves? In answering this question I want to broaden my frame of reference beyond structuralism and deconstruction to include psychoanalytic, Marxist, and feminist approaches to literary analysis and interpretation.

Structuralism obviously provides the method for a sophisticated formal and structural analysis of autobiographical works. Such an examination of their *internal* networks of signification can be a valuable tool for gathering information about a text's semantic qualities, an activity integral to the broader work of explication and interpretation—especially of overtly creative or imaginative autobiographical works. Since such a method focuses on the identification of structural oppositions as they exist in narrative—at the level of organizing characters and places, and at the more particular levels of imagery and symbol—structuralist method can be extremely valuable in showing how the content of an autobiographical narrative is mirrored and reinforced by the organization of its formal parts. Such a structural analysis will also no doubt prove extremely revealing in the study of more traditional, non-"literary" kinds of autobiographies, which might seem at first hand to have no conscious (or unconscious) formal principles of organization beyond straightforward narrative exposition. Structuralism's value for autobiographical studies is that it has the advantage of showing how and why a work of literature *works* the way it does, revealing semantic

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qualities embedded deep in an autobiography's structural layers. Its value lies too in its being not a pre-disposed interpretive method, but a method of revealing material *for* interpretation.

The value of a structuralist report on the network of oppositions in an autobiographical work will at once be questioned by a deconstruction of the easy hierarchy of their key terms, deconstruction having been born of just such a questioning of Saussure and Lévi-Strauss by Derrida. That is, a deconstructive analysis of an autobiographical work will necessarily begin by de-constructing the oppositional construction of the work in question. The author's hierarchy of terms, characters, images, symbols, etc., will be probed for their soft spots, his discriminations questioned by the critic's attempt to show how the author himself implicitly questions them. Ultimately, such key terms and images will find their hierarchies leveled or even reversed. As a "reading" of an autobiographical work, the deconstructionist's will focus precisely on key terms whose meanings are at once crucial and seemingly "self-evident." One effect of such a critical reading may be to reveal how terms which seem to refer for their meaning outside the text in fact generate their own meanings internally—as metaphors or tropes in a *self-referential* network. Whether such a term be one like "I" or "remember," it will, in a deconstructive analysis of an autobiographical work, be understood and analyzed as a rhetorical device or metaphor, much like what we have already observed de Man doing in his reading of Wordsworth's *Essays on Epitaphs.*

The other effect of a deconstructive reading in this regard will be to reveal the implicit or explicit *strategies* behind such structures (the key value of deconstruction is just that in de-constructing a literary structure it presents the logic, or strategy, of the author's so structuring his work [whether consciously or unconsciously]; the paradox here is that the strategy is obscured by the structure, so that it has to be taken apart in order for the strategy to "show"). We can take a quick example from Wordsworth's *The Prelude.* A key opposition of terms in the poem is that between remembering and forgetting. The structural opposition between the two in the poem seems clearly drawn and hierarchized, "memory" being the agency which, as Wordsworth recaptures what he has "forgotten," helps him in overcoming the "impairment" of his imagination. But we find that something like the opposite is at work when we compare this opposition to another one in the poem, that between remembering and imagining. For it turns out it is precisely "forgetting" which allows for Wordsworth's imagination to creatively "remember" his past in a poem which gives his past something like

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what Eliot called in *Four Quartets* "another pattern." A deconstructive analysis of Wordsworth's poem questions the meaning of such key terms, finding that "memory" and "forget" work like metaphors in his poem for something like their opposite.[25] In its ability to reveal such strategies and workings, a deconstructive approach to the analysis of autobiographical literature can provide a wealth of information for critics more interested in the activity of interpretation than what is often the thankless rigor of deconstructing.

One such broad field of interpretation is that covered by the literary critic's uses of the theories and processes of psychoanalysis.[26] Here, of course, the pitfalls are numerous, and the thing most to be avoided is the attempt to use Freud and company to psychoanalyze the autobiographer. The value of psychoanalytic thought lies rather in its being a model *for* the process of interpretation and in its ability to shed light on the self-analytical function of much autobiographical writing. Thus Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* and his essay "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" may be the most significant of his works for the study of autobiographical texts. To follow the vicissitudes of repression, displacement, distortion, and condensation in the transposition of "experience" into the content of an autobiographical work may be the most fruitful avenue for a psychoanalytic approach to autobiography. Such an approach can combine close attention to literary qualities like imagery, symbol, and metaphor with the interpretive strategies of Freud at his most daring. Autobiography, like any other verbal form, is, in Kenneth Burke's important formulation, "symbolic action."[27] Such action constitutes the conscious and unconscious presentation of actual personal and social contradictions toward the end of resolving such conflicts (symbolically, if not in fact). Both Freud and Burke can be used to probe the ways in which autobiographical composition becomes a form of self-analysis. In this regard "Analysis Terminable and Interminable," along with lesser known essays of Freud, including "Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through," and "Construction in Analysis," may be used to shed important light on the relationship between the process of psychoanalysis and the processes of literary self-analysis.[28]

While Freudian theory can be extremely helpful in understanding the private, personal, and spiritual value of autobiographical literature, and in interpreting its psychological content, Marxist theory can be helpful in understanding its public, social, and political value (and function)—and in exploring the ideological roots of both its form and its content. Created primarily by critics as literature about the "self,"

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autobiographical studies can well use the proddings of Marxism and sociologically-oriented criticisms toward an examination of such works which pays more attention to their depiction (or embodiment) of ideological and socio-economic forces as they determine what we often too easily term "individual" behavior or individual consciousness. Often such forces can be seen at work determining in part our very conception of what the "self" or "individuality" is. Thus Marxist theory can open up autobiographical works to an examination not only of their ideological content (and workings) and the social and communal aspects of their ostensibly private meditations, but also to an examination of the relationship between our conceptions of individuality, on the one hand, and private property, on the other. Michael Ryan has outlined such an approach in his article in *diacritics* alluded to earlier.[29] While his essay in its details has many problems, the general nature of his argument is worth noting.[30]

Ryan insists that both the "subject" of an autobiographical work, and the "truth" which it speaks, represent public and social, rather than private, "property." His emphasis is on the word "property," a term he uses interchangeably in his article to encompass both material and intellectual possessions; it is the key word upon which his argument about the relationship between capitalism and conceptions of the "self" pivots. The thrust of his argument is that a Marxist analysis of autobiography, and the philosophical conceptions which both explicitly and implicitly authorize autobiography *and* its criticism, will necessarily re-orient our conception of the "self" in an autobiographical work and our conception of the ostensibly private nature of its discourse. What he calls for is a theoretical and methodological conception of "self" and "discourse" which focuses on the social and ideological nature of their determination, rather than on what he takes to be the illusory notion that they are private possessions. Ryan's central hypothesis, of course, is that our illusory sense of what constitutes a "self" and its discourse is a kind of superstructure which has its base in capitalist conceptions about private property. However problematical such a simple linking may be, Ryan's argument does suggest how a Marxist-oriented criticism of autobiography can both help to demystify our notions of what constitutes the "self" and "self-knowledge," and how it might focus in a penetrating way on an autobiography's tendency to embody and reflect contemporary ideological formations.

Such can be the value, too, of a feminist approach to the study of autobiographical literature. Feminist criticism, of course, denotes less an analytical method than a specific area of inquiry. Like any other

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critical theory, feminism predisposes the critic to look at an autobiographical work in a particular way, but in practice feminist criticism can incorporate the methods of any one of the approaches discussed above. That is, the results of a structuralist or deconstructive analysis may form the basis for a feminist analysis of an autobiographical text, and psychoanalytic and Marxist theory can provide a method for reading such works from a feminist point of view. But such methods will always be subservient to the general goals of a feminist inquiry into autobiography: an analysis of the representation of women in autobiographical literature, including how women writers represent themselves and why, an analysis of relationships between women, and between men and women, in autobiographies, an examination of the characteristic kinds of autobiographical works produced by women, and an analysis of the function for women of writing autobiographical works.

A feminist approach to the study of autobiography necessarily raises a number of questions about the nature of autobiography itself. In the first place, it requires a wholesale rethinking of the genre question, for our sense of what constitutes "autobiography" has in the main been worked out by male critics studying autobiographical works by other men. A feminist approach to autobiography must begin with a recognition that the traditional sense of autobiography as a life history that presents in non-fictional prose the chronologically ordered details of a life whose public significance lends the autobiography *its* significance has its roots rather exclusively in male experience. Since during the rise of autobiography as a literary form women had been cut off from access to the kinds of experience deemed significant enough to warrant the production of a suitably literary autobiography, the writings of women have been excluded from helping to mould our conception either of what kind of experience goes into autobiography or what an autobiography is. If, historically, women's autobiographies were of necessity written in the private sphere in the form of diaries, letters, personal memoirs, and journals, then our conception of autobiography as a form must accommodate them.

Such an accommodation is bound to have a significant impact on the study of autobiographical literature. Obviously, it will alter our sense of what constitutes "autobiography." (Should, for example, autobiographical works produced as private documents be categorized with those produced for the public sphere?) Likewise, it will add to and expand our conception of the nature and function of the autobiographical act. Already, feminist approaches to autobiography have generated

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a number of pressing questions: are women's autobiographies fundamentally different from men's? do they constitute another kind of writing? and most importantly, do they require a theory and a practice of criticism different from that generated by the study of autobiographical works by men?[31]

If it is true that criticism of autobiographical literature has been slower than the criticism of more "literary" kinds of texts to shed its "romanticism," this is perhaps because of the nature of autobiographical works themselves. In a sense private, meditative, nostalgic, and seemingly informal, preoccupied more often than not with the personal life, and imbued with sentiment and a kind of wistfulness, autobiographies often present themselves as needing anything *but* theories to understand and appreciate them. But such surfaces may in fact belie the very *need* of a theoretically well-thought-out critical approach to the depths they cover. If there has been a particular resistance to theory in the study of autobiographical literature it is, no doubt, only the particular manifestation of a more general one in literary studies *per se.* Although I have tried to show here how and why contemporary theories can be of use in the criticism of autobiographical literature, it must be remembered that *any* approach to such literature is always already theoretical to begin with, and that the application of contemporary theory only makes more self-conscious something we have always been doing—approaching such literature with certain pre-conceptions about what it is, why it exists, and how it can best be understood. For, as John Crowe Ransom wrote, "the reputed condition of no-theory in the critic's mind is illusory." "Theory," he concludes, "which is expectation, always determines criticism, and never more than when it is unconscious."[32]

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NOTES

1. See William Spengemann's indispensable bibliographic essay in *The Forms of Autobiography: Episodes in the History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).
2. What follows is an expanded version of a talk delivered in March, 1983, at a meeting of the Philological Association of the Carolinas, in Charleston, South Carolina.
3. Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).
4. See Francis R. Hart, "Notes for an Anatomy of Modern Autobiography," in *New Literary History*, vol. 1, No. 3 (Spring 1970), pp. 485-511; William Howarth,

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"Some Principles of Autobiography," *New Literary History,* Vol. 5, No.2 (Winter 1974), pp. 363–381; Alfred Kazin, "Autobiography As Narrative," *Michigan Quarterly,* No. 3 (1964), pp. 210–216; and Barrett J. Mandel, "The Autobiographer's Art," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* No. 27 (1968), pp. 215–226. See also the essays collected in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical,* ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

5. Francis R. Hart, "Notes for an Anatomy of Modern Autobiography," p. 485.
6. Ibid., p. 511.
7. William Howarth, "Some Principles of Autobiography," in Olney, *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical,* p. 85.
8. See Jean Starobinski, "The Style of Autobiography," in *Literary Style: A Symposium,* ed. Seymour Chatman (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 285–294 (reprinted in Olney, *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*); Louis A. Renza, "The Veto of the Imagination: A Theory of Autobiography," in Olney, *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*; James Olney, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972); his contributions to *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*; and John Sturrock, "The New Model Autobiographer," in *New Literary History,* Vol. 9 (1977), pp. 51–63.
9. Olney's book is particularly notable for the variety of autobiographical literature it treats. His study was important in helping to expand the range of our conception of what constitutes "autobiography."
10. Elizabeth Bruss, *Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).
11. See note no. 1.
12. Avrom Fleishman, *The Language of Autobiography* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1983). See also Janet V. Gunn, *Autobiography: The Poetics of Experience* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982).
13. Jeffrey Mehlman, *A Structural Study of Autobiography: Proust, Leiris, Sartre, Lévi-Strauss* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974).
14. Jacques Derrida, "Coming Into One's Own," in *Psychoanalysis and the Question of the Text: Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1976–1977,* ed. Geoffrey Hartman (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 114–148. Derrida's reading of chapter 2 of Freud's work uses the thinly disguised autobiographical circumstances of Freud's observation of his grandson's fort/da game to work up an analysis of Freud's own activity as an analytical writer.
15. Eugene Vance, "Augustine's *Confessions* and the Grammar of Selfhood," in *Genre,* No. 6 (1973), p. 3.
16. Paul de Man, "Autobiography as De-facement," *MLN,* Vol. 94 (December 1979).
17. Ibid., p. 930, emphasis mine.
18. Candace Lang, "Autobiography in the Aftermath of Romanticism," *diacritics,* Vol. 12 (1982), pp. 2–16. In her article Lang reviews James Olney's *Metaphors of Self,* the essays collected by him in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical,* and William Spengemann's *The Forms of Autobiography.*
19. Ibid., p. 4.
20. Ibid. Lang is certainly right in her assertion that the criticism of autobiographical literature has, in the main, been conservative. The matter, however, is not quite as desperate as she makes it seem. Jeffrey Mehlman's *A Structural Study*

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of Autobiography goes unmentioned in her review, as does Daniel T. O'Hara's *Tragic Knowledge: Yeats's Autobiography and Hermeneutics* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1981), both of which are "post-Romantic" (i.e., "post-structuralist") in their orientation. Failure to mention books such as Mehlman's and O'Hara's, as well as the essays discussed above, inevitably makes Lang's essay distort the situation it seeks to reflect; their inclusion would certainly mitigate her argument. Also, Lang tends to play down the extent to which some of the essays in the Olney volume address autobiography from a "post-Romantic" perspective, most notably those by Renza and Sprinker.

21. Ibid., p. 16.
22. For a fine discussion of why the general study of autobiography and autobiographical fiction and poetry has become so popular in recent years see James Olney's essay, "Autobiography and the Cultural Moment," in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical.*
23. Paul de Man, "Autobiography as De-facement," p. 920.
24. See my "Being in the Text: Autobiography and the Problem of the Subject," in *MLN,* Vol. 97, No. 4 (December 1982), pp. 1055–1059.
25. My discussion of Wordsworth's *The Prelude* briefly sketches in an argument I make at length in my *Being In The Text: Self-Representation from Wordsworth to Roland Barthes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 39–91.
26. For a book-length discussion of the applicability to criticism of the *process* itself of psychoanalysis see Meredith Skura, *The Literary Use of the Psychoanalytic Process* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981). Skura's focus on the psychoanalytic *process* stems from her view that psychoanalysis "is not dedicated solely to disease or symptoms or primitive experiences, but offers instead a theory and a method for studying how the whole mind works—for understanding another human being as he tries to describe his world in words" (p. 2).
27. See Burke's *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1941), and *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).
28. "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" is in Volume 23 of *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1964); "Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through" is in Volume 12, and "Construction in Analysis" in Volume 23.
29. Michael Ryan, "Self-Evidence" (a review of Philip Lejeune's *Le Pacte Autobiographique* [Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975]), in *diacritics: A review of contemporary criticism,* Vol. 10, No. 2 (Summer 1980), pp. 2–16.
30. His essay begins with a critique of the notion that some truths are "self-evident." His argument, which is informed both by Marxism and deconstruction, is sound enough—that so-called "self-evident" truth is always "constructed, formed, or constituted by discourse, history, [and] society" (p. 2). His discussion of Lejeune's book is an attack on the "principle" of self-evidence which underwrites his critical work on autobiographical literature, and his comments, informed as they are by deconstruction, work to show how Lejeune's ideas about the self, and self-knowledge, are idealistic and Romantic. Much of what Ryan says here is somewhat obvious, but his points are well taken in the context of a discussion of the theory of criticism as it pertains to autobiographi-

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cal works. But when his argument moves to an overtly political level, it becomes strained and clumsy, losing much of its critical force. It is Ryan's claim here that Lejeune's idealism, and his ahistoricism, in fact constitute a capitalist tract against the proletariat, women, and minorities. Thus "Lejeune's text is ideological not in the sense of being a 'reflection' of an imperialist, white, western, capitalist society . . . but in the sense of being an active, effective part of the machinery of class dominance" (p. 11). Ryan's working up to such a conclusion is too involved to pursue here, of course. But it does have the effect of undercutting the quality of his argument, even for readers who, like myself, may generally share the political perspective which animates it.

31. For a valuable collection of essays on women's autobiographies which raise some of these questions see *Women's Autobiography: Essays in Criticism,* ed. Estelle C. Jelinck (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980).
32. John Crowe Ransom, *The World's Body,* quoted in Geoffrey Hartman, *Criticism in the Wilderness: The Study of Literature Today* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 174.

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MARCIA JACOBSON

The Mask of Fiction: William Dean Howells's Experiments in Autobiography

Autobiography fascinated William Dean Howells. In one of several "Editor's Easy Chair" columns on the subject, he suggested, "There is no tale any man can invent which will compare in interest with the tale which every man lives and has but to tell in its truth in order to hold his hearer breathless, or panting for more" (April 1911, 795). He saw in his own mature years "a brood of autobiographies, such as the reading world has not see before" (796), and (in another column) wondered "whether we have not of late been having rather too much of a good thing . . . whether the autobiographers have been overworking their public or not" (February 1904, 478). In spite of his reservations, Howells contributed lavishly to the outpouring in the form of six autobiographies. He died with the plan of a seventh sketched out. Of course he had much to memorialize. He had grown up in the decades before the Civil War, living in a succession of small towns in an Ohio that was not too far removed from the frontier. Like many others of his time and place, he received little formal schooling and was working full time when still a child. As a young man, he visited New England in time to meet the last of her great writers. He later settled in the cultural centers of America, first Boston, then New York. He became a prolific novelist, the foremost critic of his age, and an editor of enormous power. He was a shrewd and ultimately wealthy businessman. He knew virtually every writer of note in America in the late nineteenth century. He outlived his own generation and—to step for a moment beyond the possibilities of autobiography—died a couple of years after World War I in New York City.

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For all the intrinsic interest of Howells's adult experience, however, the autobiographies deal mostly with his early years; the planned but never written autobiography was to venture into his middle years. The autobiographies consequently overlap one another: some subjects are treated three and four times. But they do not seem redundant. As Howells understood, there are many ways of telling one's life's story. In the same column that extolled the autobiographic genre for its interest, Howells observed, "it is quite possible for a man to keep on writing lives of himself almost indefinitely . . . we are each of us so many in one, that in treating of our own story from a different side and at a different depth, we have a practically inexhaustible opportunity to autobiographize" (796). This understanding is central to Howells's repeated and varied attempts to tell his own story. Looking back, he could see himself as a typical boy in a simpler era in *A Boy's Town,* as an avid reader who lived for books alone in *My Literary Passions,* or as a young man destined for literary success and national recognition in *Years of My Youth.* The psychologically oriented critic will see in this succession of books a persistent attempt on Howells's part to come to terms with the meaning of his childhood and youth.[1] Complementing this interpretation of Howells's work, we can also note that the numerous autobiographies represent a series of formal experiments through which Howells sought a form adequate to a truthful account of his life. Such an account, Howells observed in another of his autobiography columns, "for the student of man . . . would be a manual such as has never yet been supplied" (October 1909, 789). "Very likely it would be impossible of realization," he added, but he himself made a valiant attempt.

A central difficulty that Howells encountered in his attempt to write his autobiography as he would wish is related to his notion of different selves within one. Not only, as he discovered, could a different perspective on one's life produce a different reading of the life, but an appreciation of the distance between past and present led to the recognition that the self that lived the life and the self that told the life were not the same. A man incorporated different selves both concurrently and sequentially. We become aware of Howells's understanding of this latter issue and the problems it created for the autobiographer when we look at the first person narratives. Repeatedly the adult author signals his separation from the protagonist of his story, and in doing so, undercuts what he has just told us. *My Year in a Log Cabin* (published first as an essay in 1887, then as a small book in 1893) was Howells's first autobiography. It tells the story of his family's futile attempt to

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establish a cooperative community at Eureka Mills, Ohio. The account ends with an adult Howells returning to his boyhood home. The present miller's son shows him around, and Howells observes, "The boy at my elbow could not make out why the gray-mustached, middle-aged man should care, and when I attempted to tell him that I had once been a boy of his age there and that this place had been my home, the boy of whom I have written so freely seemed so much less a part of me than the boy to whom I spoke, that, upon the whole, I had rather the sense of imposing upon my listener" (62). With this concluding line, the preceding text is suddenly robbed of its substance: we are reminded that the boy described is merely a memory with no demonstrable connection to the life of the author. The younger self in Howells's essay, "My First Visit to New England" (1894; republished as the first chapter of the autobiography-cum-literary reminiscence, *Literary Friends and Acquaintance,* 1900) is similarly undermined. In this autobiographical essay, Howells describes the trip he took at seventeen backward into time, into culture, and into the literary life that he longed to share. He so perfectly captures the enthusiasm and idealism and timidity of seventeen that it is a shock when the narrator tells us that he is nearing seventy and notes several times that "There is an apparitional quality in my presences, at this point or that, in the dim past" (23). In fact, seventy is a fiction which suggests that we think of Howells's narrator as a character created by the author to register his recognition of the estrangement he feels from his past self.[2] Even in *My Literary Passions* (serialized, 1893–95) the younger self is reduced to the apparitional at one point. This is an autobiography told in the form of reflections on books and authors that Howells loved at various points in his life. Because he has reread many of the works since his initial passion for them, and reread many close to the time of writing, there is less sense of discontinuity with the past than in Howells's other autobiographies. Still, there are repeated references to "the boy who once was I" (91), and finally, after mention of a now dead friend, the observation, "In fact, I who was then I, might be said to be dead too, so little is my past self like my present self in anything but the 'increasing purpose' which has kept me one in my love of literature" (204). Clearly for Howells, a first person narrative was problematic, for the "I" masked a distance between past and present selves that he found to be troublesome once he gave himself to writing his story.

In discovering this problem of multiple selves within even a first person narrator, Howells touched on an issue of explicit concern to modern theorists of autobiography. Philippe Lejeune, in the process of

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examining a handful of modern autobiographies in which the author refers to himself as "he" instead of "I," concludes that these autobiographies in the third person are works which make explicit the condition of all autobiographies:

> [A]utobiography . . . rests upon an articulation and a perpetual interchange between discourse and history. The inherent duality of the narrative voice corresponds to gaps in perspective between narrator and hero. These discrepancies of information and appreciation facilitate the games of focalization and voice typical of this kind of narrative (for example, limitation of one's field of vision to that of the character, use of narrator's intrusions, presentation of lyric or ironic passages, etc.). These tensions are, if not completely hidden, at least compensated for by the use of the first person, which posits a single signifier whose enunciated function and stated reference constantly change. (31)

Shirley Neuman also relates this duality in narrative voice to the fact of alterity or otherness in autobiography: the situation that exists because "the root of autobiography is the writing *(graph)* of a prior text, life *(bio),* which is prefigured to it" (323). The narrating "I" and the performing "I" look and sound alike, but in fact, one is interpreting the other.

Lejeune's parenthetical list of games reminds us that the difficulties inherent in the autobiographical act are also opportunities. We saw Howells taking advantage of one such opportunity in creating a narrator who claims he is nearing seventy in "My First Visit to New England" as a way of emphasizing the youth of his protagonist. Neuman too points to difficulties that are also opportunities in the paradoxes she sees arising from the fact of alterity. These include "the paradox of veracity": "in order to make his reader believe in the truth of an experience so subjective that the autobiographer alone can attest to its veracity, he will in some sense treat that experience as if he were examining it from outside himself, as if he were a biographer" (320), and "the paradox of historicity": the problem that arises because "the protagonist of an autobiography is *not* the author; he is someone who has developed *into* the author" (321) and so requires that "the autobiographer treat himself as *continuous* with his protagonist and that he treat himself as *separate* from that protagonist. He describes his past selves because they provide a developmental continuity with his present self; at the same time, he makes those past selves the object of mature description, retrospective analysis, judgement and irony, that is, he treats them as separate from his present self and defines himself *against* them" (322). This last brings us back to the games Lejeune

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lists, reminding us of their potentially profound significance. Both paradoxes have special relevance to Howells's work as his emphasis on the apparitional quality of his past selves and the discontinuity of past and present in the instances I cited from the first person narratives show. In order to write the truthful account of his life that would satisfy his own requirement for autobiography, Howells needed to find a way of rendering personal experience "as if he were a biographer" so that his past self would not suddenly seem insubstantial and a way of treating himself as continuous with and separate from his protagonist in a sustained manner so that his narrative would not dissolve on him as he wrote.

A Boy's Town (1890) is Howells's first long autobiography. It is a remarkable work, a book in which Howells took a great step forward in solving the problems inherent in autobiography. The book begins with the first person narrator presenting himself as an historian whose subject is "what a boy of forty years ago was like" (1). In turning his own life into a representative story and in presenting himself as an historian, Howells was following the lead established by such books as Thomas Bailey Aldrich's *The Story of a Bad Boy* (1869), Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* (1876), and Charles Dudley Warner's *Being a Boy* (1877) –all books Howells had once reviewed. In the role of historian Howells describes the mundane life of a young boy in the Hamilton, Ohio, he knew, here generalized as the Boy's Town. The chapters focus on such topics as "Schools and Teachers," "Manners and Customs," and "Circuses and Shows." Occasionally the narrator philosophizes about the nature of boyhood: at several points he asserts, "a child is a savage. Like the savage, he dwells on an earth round which the whole solar system revolves, and he is himself the centre of all life on the earth. It has no meaning but as it related to him" (6). At other times, he indulges in a heavy-handed irony designed to universalize his remarks on boy nature: "I do not pretend that what I say of the boys of forty years ago is true of boys nowadays. . . . I understand that these boys always like to go tidily dressed and to keep themselves neat. They would rather go to school than fish, or hunt, or swim, any day. . . . They never laugh at a fellow when he hurts himself or tears his clothes. They are noble and self-sacrificing friends" (212). We might best characterize this historian's voice as avuncular, suitable to the audience of *Harper's Young People* in which the book was first published as a serial, and very clearly a character created by the author in the same sense that the nearly seventy year old narrator of "My First Visit to New England" is a character. His is the dominant voice in the

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book, performing, as is evident in my quotations, some of the judgmental functions Neuman cites as the province of the autobiographer who is aware of a separation between himself and his protagonist.

Howells's protagonist was called "I" in the draft version of *A Boy's Town,* but finally assumed a complex identity apart from that of the historian narrator—a further indication of Howells's sense of the alterity of his subject.[3] Howells called him "my boy," explaining, "I mean him sometimes for a boy in general, as well as a boy in particular" (2). The text further elaborates by referring to both "my boy" and "a boy" —the boy in particular and the boy in general. Howells may have been recalling Warner's book with its references to "I," the narrator's younger self, and "John," the generic boy. Warner does not make much of the distinction, and in fact forgets about it two thirds of the way through his book. Howells, however, uses his dual protagonist effectively to move his book beyond history to autobiography.[4] With the inclusion of the personal, *A Boy's Town* becomes an illustration of a principle that Howells would later articulate in one of the "Easy Chair" columns devoted to autobiography: "every one in this world is circumstanced . . . no one can sequester himself from his circumstance without losing something of 'his own peculiar difference' " (October 1909, 797).

For all the subtlety and inherent interest in Howells's presentation of his protagonist, what is most important in terms of his future experiments in autobiography is the basic fact that by casting his protagonist as a character in his history he has found a way of rendering personal experience "as if he were a biographer" (perhaps novelist would be more appropriate in Howells's case) and thereby freed himself of that sense of dealing with an apparition that we saw in the first person narratives. Although the historian narrator controls the presentation of "my boy" and "a boy," the boy's feelings are entered into vividly without the narrator's wondering that he himself could have acted or felt in such a way. Sometimes the result is humorous, as when the narrator describes the superstitions "my boy" shared with others, stooping from his avuncular role to the child's perception: "When you saw a lizard, you had to keep your mouth tight shut, or else the lizard would run down your throat before you knew it" (201). Sometimes the result is a little frightening, as is the case with the rituals and unwritten laws that governed boyhood behavior. Again Howells speaks from the boy's perspective, though the adult narrator's voice is never completely strained out of these sections of the book: "a boy was bound to defend them [girls] against anything that he thought slighting or insulting;

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and you did not have to verify the fact that anything had been said or done; you merely had to hear that it had" (74). At other times, the two voices, that of the historian and that of the child, come together to provide a double perspective on the past: "Inwardly he was all thrones, principalities, and powers, the foe of tyrants, the friend of good emperors, and the intimate of magicians, and magnificently apparelled; outwardly he was an incorrigible little sloven, who suffered in all social exigencies from the direst bashfulness, and wished nothing so much as to shrink out of the sight of men if they spoke to him" (177). In the first two instances we see the narrator playing at one of the games Lejeune lists ("limitation of one's field of vision to that of the character"), while the third reveals him—again—in his judgmental role. That the narrator can change his position in relation to his protagonist is a clear indication that Howells has succeeded in creating a protagonist with enough solidity so that a moment of intense self-awareness on the part of the adult narrator cannot rob him of his substance.

In spite of his success in capturing his past self in *A Boy's Town,* the book cannot be said to be entirely successful as an autobiography because it does not relate the past self to the present, writing self. Howells's creation of the historian narrator, which made possible the presentation of his younger self as if he were a fictional character, also prevented his linking past and present. The difficulty does not lie with the use of a characterized narrator, but with the particular avuncular narrator of this work. His character, inflexibly older and wiser than "my boy," precludes such identification. Significantly, Howells did not return to this narrator. Instead, he returned to a less narrowly characterized first person in "My First Visit to New England" and *My Literary Passions.* He may have thought that with their kinship to literary reminiscence, he would not encounter in these works the problem with the first person narrative that he did at the end of *My Year in a Log Cabin.* Or, he may not have thought about the issue at all, but, after a long career of writing travel books and personal essays, felt a desire to speak in his own voice again. Whatever his understanding of his endeavor, he learned enough from it not to return to a simple first person narrative again—that is, he learned, as we have seen, that a simple first person narrative is an illusion.

His next experiments took him as far from first person autobiography as possible. Both *The Flight of Pony Baker,* subtitled *A Boy's Town Story,* (partially serialized intermittently 1898–1902) and *New Leaf Mills* (1913) are fictionalized accounts of Howells's youth. In taking

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this form, they represent a return to the lesson of *A Boy's Town* where the younger self is presented as a character in his own right. *Pony Baker* is aimed at children; it dramatizes an experience that perhaps every child has: a desire to run away from parents who he fancies are unsympathetic to him—in this case, overprotective parents. Pony is goaded on by the bad boy of the school who encourages him to run away with Indians who come to town, with the circus, on a raft, and so on—Howells covering many of the special events he describes in *A Boy's Town.* Pony gets as far away as the family barn, where he spends a miserable night and is delighted to be found by his father and restored to the family. *Pony Baker* differs from the novels in which Howells drew on his personal experience—I think particularly of the stories of Basil and Isabel March—in its profound closeness to Howells's life. Comparison of this book with Howells's other autobiographies indicates some invented material: Pony's family situation is slightly different from what Howells's was (he is the only boy, perhaps a bit of wish fulfillment on the part of an author who was always competing with an older brother), and I cannot find any indication that Howells ever entertained as serious and long lasting thoughts of running away as Pony does. Pony's exacting though loving parents and his struggle to please his mother particularly and yet conform to the behavior of his peers are developed in detail. In this way the book realizes much that is only hinted at in *A Boy's Town* where "my boy" 's life is subordinated to "a boy" 's life; it appears that the fictional mode gave Howells a kind of freedom hitherto unavailable to him. At the same time, the book differs from Howells's other fiction in that it lacks the kind of coherence that Howells's fictional worlds have. Pony has a cousin who, oddly enough, shares his own real name: Frank Baker. Frank's parents are characterized the same way Pony's are, and Frank himself is an exact counterpart to Pony. Whereas Pony is too easily led by his peers to please his mother, "Frank Baker was one of those fellows that every mother would feel her boy was safe with. She would be sure that no crowd he was in was going to do any harm or come to any, for he would have an anxious eye out for everybody, and he would stand between the crowd and the mischief that a crowd of boys nearly always wants to do" (166). In short, Frank is an idealized double of Pony. Why Howells thought it necessary to include Frank is not clear. He is not connected with Pony's story, but seems instead to serve the author's present personal needs in some unarticulated way. The episodes involving Frank hint at the author's need to comment on his past as he now judges it, but the form of the book makes this impossible.

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What we have here is a story given substance through its fictionalizing, but still incomplete as an autobiography because it lacks a means whereby the author can enter into his own story. Like *A Boy's Town, Pony Baker* solves one but not both of the problems of autobiography that I have been discussing.

New Leaf Mills is an equally curious book. It covers the same year as that described in *My Year in a Log Cabin,* only now the focus is on Howells's parents (here called Ann and Owen Powell) and their temperamental differences that made that year such a hard one for the family. An adult understanding, for the most part filtered out of *My Year in a Log Cabin,* informs Howells's presentation of his father's mixture of idealism and ineffectualness and his mother's mounting despair as she saw herself condemned to live among people who were socially and intellectually her inferiors. The fictional mode of this book—liberating as that of *Pony Baker*—gave Howells license to tell his parents' story more fully and memorably than he does anywhere else. But his own youthful story intrudes just enough for us to recognize that here again the author's personal needs wanted satisfaction that the fiction was unable to supply. With its focus on the parents, the younger Howells is necessarily only peripherally present in *New Leaf Mills.* He is called the Dreamer, the only unnamed character in the story, and is no more than briefly characterized. Howells's strategy of submerging his younger self in his family story is not entirely successful, however, for remembered frustrations occasionally break into the text, as when Howells speaks of "the flute which he [Owen Powell] got for the next younger boy [himself], and then left him to nature in the art of playing on it. He believed that you could do what you wished to do if you wished it potently enough; and he left the boy likewise to nature in his struggles with the grammars of some foreign languages which he began attempting while he was failing with the flute" (30). As this quotation makes clear, the adult author who understands the adults whose story he tells also remembers himself as the child of those adults. Like *Pony Baker,* this book hints at a continuity between childhood and adulthood that needs to be dealt with. And, like all of the earlier autobiographies, *New Leaf Mills* leaves unsolved the issue of continuity between present and past selves.

Howells's last autobiography was *Years of My Youth* (1916), a work covering his life up to 1860 when he left Ohio to serve as consul at Venice. It was a difficult book for him to write.[5] He brooded about the fact that he had already told much of his early life's story. He wanted to be as truthful as possible, but found the effort taxing. And after hav-

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ing written so many autobiographies, he could not start from scratch. He did write some new material, but he also incorporated—with small changes—autobiographical material that had been published at several different points earlier in his life (including *My Year in a Log Cabin*, without the concluding reflections that rob the text of its substance). He drew on a boyhood diary and he consulted his old letters. Wonderfully, in light of all this, the result was a very readable book in which Howells speaks more directly and revealingly about himself than in any of his other autobiographies. He speaks openly of his extreme closeness to his mother, of his regret at being left so much to his own devices in the matter of seeking an education, of the bookishness and prudishness that isolated him from life and ultimately hurt him as a novelist, and—most stunningly—of the hypochondria that darkened so much of his childhood. His particular fear was hydrophobia—he apparently had heard some discussion of death from rabies—and he tells us that "even now, after sixty years, I cannot bring myself to write it [the word 'hydrophobia'] or speak it without some such shutting of the heart as I knew at the sight or sound of it in that dreadful time. The effect went deeper than I could say. . . . In self-defense I learnt to practice a psychological juggle; I came to deal with my own state of mind as another would deal with it, and to combat my fears as if they were alien" (81).

As this passage indicates, *Years of My Youth* is (largely) a first person narrative. Unlike Howells's earlier autobiographies, however, this one succeeds in establishing a continuity between the older, narrating self and the younger, acting self, and it presents past idiosyncratic experience with a convincing degree of solidity. It achieves continuity through the use of a first person narrator who is not so narrowly characterized as the narrator of *A Boy's Town* that identification with the younger self is precluded. Instead, this narrator responds freely to his past self, sometimes identifying with past points of view, sometimes judging his past behavior, defining himself in contrast to friends and family members, meditating on what the passage from youth to old age has taught him—in short, taking advantage of the opportunities open to the self-conscious first person narrator that Lejeune and Neuman note. So strong is Howells's sense of continuity with his past that at one point he remarks, "We are all dead now, all save me and the youngest daughter of the house, but as I think back we are all living again, and others are living who are also dead" (142).

Perhaps the best instance of Howells's awareness of the distinction between his older and younger selves and the continuity between them comes when he consults his boyhood diary. He appreciates both what

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the diary records and what it does not. He can remember what books he was reading by the different, imitative writing styles he adopted although the books are not named in the diary; he can recall that he professed dismay when his father surreptitiously published one of his poems, but he notes that he recorded his joy in his diary. He is at once the child diarist again and the adult autobiographer looking indulgently at his past. So keen is his awareness of the two selves here that he speaks of his younger self as "the diarist" instead of "I" as he does elsewhere. "The diarist," like "my boy" in *A Boy's Town,* is in effect a character presented by the narrating "I"; he makes explicit the duality that is implicit in Howells's other uses of "I" in this autobiography. Like "my boy," "the diarist" has a convincing solidity about him. At one point, Howells quotes "the diarist" 's description of himself reading a French travel book and then remarks,

> I do not care much now who M. Hommaire de Hell was or what he had to say of the Russian Empire in 1840, but I wish I could see that boy wrapped in his father's cloak, and losing himself in the Frenchman's page. Though I have the feeling that we were once familiarly acquainted, I am afraid the diarist would not know me if he looked up across the space of threescore years, though he might divine in me a kindred sense of the heaviness of the long Sunday hours which he confronts when he rises from his reading. (63)

We see here both Howells's distance from his past self and his feeling of kinship with the past. We also see a younger self who is so far from being an apparition that he might be imagined to look "up across the space of threescore years."

But even the younger "I"s in this book never fade into the apparitional. *Years of My Youth* differs from the earlier first person narratives because Howells treats the narrator himself—the "I" that is at once present and past selves—as a fictional character. Doing this, he employs another version of his old "psychological juggle" in order to deal with his own condition as if from another's point of view.[6] *Years of My Youth* is divided into four sections, each beginning with a paragraph suggesting the problems of presenting that segment of his life: because what the very small child "remembers" can only be what others have told him, a record of the autobiographer's early years will necessarily have an elusive quality to it; because the older child does not really conceive of himself as a being apart from others around him, a record of these years must describe other lives as well as his own; because the adolescent does so many foolish things that his self-preserving instincts will not let him confess, an account of adolescence

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will be incomplete; because the young man's behavior is colored by both the uncertainty and the egotism of youth, an account of early adulthood cannot be flattering though it may be salutary for others. The voice that speaks in these paragraphs is a disembodied one, identified by neither noun nor pronoun. For convenience, we might think of this as the author's voice. These introductory paragraphs serve to present the "I" in the narrative to follow, making the "I" in effect the equivalent of a character presented by the author, just as "my boy" and "the diarist" are characters. Presented this way, the first person narrator is provisional from the beginning—but at the same time "real" the way a fictional character is "real." This strategy which absolves the author from complete identification with his narrator seems to be what allowed Howells the freedom to speak as revealingly about himself in this book as he does, just as the fictionalizing in *Pony Baker* and *New Leaf Mills* allowed Howells new freedoms. This strategy also seems to have allowed Howells to think of his past self concretely and objectively just as he might have thought of a fictional character—so that his past self was never robbed of its substance.

The achievement of *Years of My Youth* is considerable. With its multi-layered narrative in which the author introduces the narrator who in turn comments on the protagonist, Howells solved the problems that had manifested themselves in all of his other autobiographies. The book consequently has both the substance and continuity necessary to make an account of its subject's life as truthful as possible. In one of the introductory paragraphs to a section of the book, Howells notes, "No man, unless he puts on the mask of fiction, can show his real face or the will behind it" (110). The context makes clear that he was thinking of fiction in the form of novels, but the autobiographies, and this last one in particular, also testify to the truth-evoking power of fiction. The proposed title for Howells's next, never-to-be written autobiography, *Years of My Middle Life,* points to another book organized in the same manner and suggests to us that Howells too knew he had at last found the right form in which to preserve and present his life.

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NOTES

1. For such a discussion, see Elizabeth Stevens Prioleau's chapter on Howells's autobiographies in *The Circle of Eros*, 133–49.
2. In the magazine version of "My First Visit to New England," Howells spoke of

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himself as nearly sixty. He was exaggerating only a little: he would have been only fifty-six or fifty-seven at the time. When the essay was incorporated in *Literary Friends and Acquaintance,* Howells changed sixty to seventy, now adding about seven years to his age. At this point, it seems to me, he was closest to thinking of his narrator as a character. When a second and enlarged edition of *Literary Friends and Acquaintance* was published in 1910, Howells let the form of the first edition stand.

3. I am indebted to John W. Crowley for this information.

4. For a fuller discussion of this issue see my "William Dean Howells's (Auto)biography: A Reading of *A Boy's Town.*"

5. For a discussion of Howells's difficulties, see David J. Nordloh's "Introduction" to *Years of My Youth and Three Essays,* xi-xxvii.

6. John W. Crowley treats Howells's "psychological juggle" as a principle that explains much of Howells's youthful response to books and his own attitude toward his writing: "He worked this juggle at first through reading, by identifying himself with characters of other writers and learning to understand his own state of mind by simultaneously observing and 'living' theirs. Later he practiced the juggle by writing himself, in the sense both of making up his own poems and stories, and of projecting his conflicts into them" (48–49). Howells himself described the process of observing one's self through the eyes of another as a "psychological juggle" as early as 1885 in *Indian Summer* (150).

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HAMILTON E. COCHRANE

Brother Against Brother: Roger North's *Life of Dr. John North*

"John North was a man of eminence in his day—a prebend of Westminster, Professor of Greek at Cambridge, Master of Trinity College, and Clerk of the King's Closet—now totally forgotten."[1] Thus beginning his "Life, Illness and Death of Dr. John North," Lytton Strachey identifies the most formidable problem faced by the seventeenth-century scholar's first biographer, Roger North.[2] John North lived a private and ordinary life, actively cultivating obscurity, avoiding recognition, and never achieving the prominence in public affairs his brothers Francis and Dudley—whose lives Roger also wrote—did. Even a relatively modern critic of biography like Sir Sidney Lee claimed that lives should be reserved for only a handful of persons: "Actions, however beneficent or honourable, which are accomplished by many thousands of persons are actions of mediocrity, and lack the dimension which justifies the biographer's notice."[3] Lee would argue that John North deserves to be forgotten; certainly there have been thousands capable of being professors of Greek and masters of colleges. Mark Longaker's mixed evaluation of the *Life of Dr. John*—that it is superior to North's other lives as a "piece of biographical composition," yet inferior "for intrinsic worth"[4]—shows that he shares Lee's assumption that "the life of a nonentity or a mediocrity, however skillfully contrived, conflicts with primary biographic principles."[5] These are only two twentieth-century articulations of a belief, much stronger in North's time, that the interest and value of a biography lies not in its form, the author's interpretations and literary art, but in its content, the subject's achievement and fame.

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If North could not exploit his subject's fame to provoke readers' curiosity in the *Life of John,* neither could he depend upon the adventure, drama, or conflict of the life itself to sustain their interest. The life of a "scholar who passed his life among his books," as Samuel Johnson knew, is "not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes."[6] Solitary and studious, John North was far removed from the political intrigue and courtroom drama which play such large roles in the *Life of Francis;* residing mostly at Cambridge, he never visited the sort of exotic places that are described in the *Life of Dudley.* A scholar's life is necessarily private, its "action" interior. Whatever intellectual excitement such a life may have involved, therefore, is difficult even to know, much less to convey.

Jean Strouse, the biographer of Alice James, recognizes the special problems faced by the writer of a "minor life":

> . . . the burden of proof rests somewhat heavily with the author of an uncelebrated life. A substantial amount of the material used in biographies of eminent people has to do with eminent achievements. What happened in the life becomes interesting because of what exists in the novels or philosophy, what took place on the battlefield or was discovered in the lab.[7]

The evidence from which Roger could build a case for John North's superiority was meager; despite a lifetime of study and research, John, anxious and often in ill-health, published very little before his death in 1683 at the age of thirty-eight: a Latin translation of a poetic fragment accompanied by some notes, and an edition of Plato. If a biographical subject produces no body of work, Strouse notes, "everything rests with the life itself and especially, therefore, on what the biographer sees and has to say about it."[8] Roger needed to find something in John's life which could justify and sustain a biography of him, but what?

Although John North published so little of his scholarship, he did leave behind a large collection of manuscripts—notes on his reading, incomplete treatises, reflections on various subjects—the record of a lifetime of study. These, however, he ordered burned after his death. Only one notebook survived. Roger could not compensate for this lack of written material by relying instead on his own memory as he did when writing the lives of his brothers Francis and Dudley. As Peter Millard points out, there were both geographic and psychological barriers: "Imprisoned in his strange neuroses, John North was not an easy man to get to know. In any case, he lived at Cambridge for most of the

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year, so that Roger could not spend extended periods of time in his company."[9] What information Roger did possess—facts pertaining to John's career, degrees, titles, dates—was of the kind which would be least useful, because it is not the career of a figure such as John North which makes him worthy of attention in the first place.

I

The scant materials, an uneventful life, a subject who sought oblivion —these obstacles demanded that Roger develop an appropriate form, strategy, and focus for the writing of John's life. Unable to write either a life-and-times or a life-and-opinions biography, Roger, like Strachey two centuries later, composed instead a brief portrait of John North emphasizing his character rather than his career. Like Geoffrey Wolff, the biographer of Harry Crosby, another minor figure, North understood that were someone to ask "Why write the life of such a man?" a reasonable response would be simply, "he interested me."[10] The goal of the portrait is to satisfy by literary means the same desire we have to know interesting individuals in life. Such portraits are characteristically brief and are often organized topically rather than chronologically. The biographer's method is to select significant and representative details which reveal the subject's essential qualities while at the same time interpreting and arranging those details into a coherent and unified pattern.

A comparison between the *Life of John* and examples of related genres helps to identify some possible sources, but, more importantly, shows that the form North developed was unique, in many respects strikingly modern, and brilliantly suited to his task. The Theophrastan character sketch creates a brief, unified portrait with a psychological emphasis. The method of the writer of characters, described by Benjamin Boyce, is the "depiction of types of moral characters . . . fashioned by means of an accumulation of suggestive, characteristic actions and words."[11] Despite these similarities, North's method differs significantly from that of the character-writer. The author of a Theophrastan character creates a composite sketch, emphasizes a single trait such as greed or ambition, and illuminates character statically, with no attention to narrative or the depiction of change. The methods of character-writer and biographer represent opposite approaches to reality: one begins with an abstraction and invents details to particularize it; the other begins with details and selects, interprets, and shapes them, arriving at the general only through the particular. While North may have learned from writers like Earle and Hall, he goes

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beyond them, especially in his ability to render the complexity of his brother's character.

Peter Millard identifies a more important influence on North, the brief character sketches inserted in histories and memoirs.[12] The context in which these portraits appear, however, does not require that they be balanced or full representations. Like minor characters in a novel, they are "flat" rather than "rounded." Not designed to stand alone, they serve a particular purpose—to fill out the cast of those playing roles in the events depicted—and, therefore, provide an inadequate model for the treatment of a subject like John North, on whom the attention of biographer and reader remains focused. Also related to the literary portrait is the summary character often found in formal biographies and employed by Roger in his *Life of Francis.* Roger's analysis of John, however, is interwoven with the record of his life, rather than separated; it charts progress over time and suggests a more complex and accurate relationship between motive and action, personality and behavior.

The formal achievement of the *Life of John* can best be seen when compared to the work of two other writers of brief lives, John Aubrey and Anthony Wood. While Aubrey's lives are full of revealing details—from Bacon's "eie of a viper" to Hobbes's singing in bed—they rarely provide a coherent framework in which these details may be understood. Aubrey's gaps await missing facts which were never discovered; his facts await missing interpretations which were never made. It is a commonplace that Aubrey's lives may be most valuable as a source for later interpretive biographies. If not masterpieces in their own right, Edgar Johnson remarks, they are "the stuff out of which masterpieces might come."[13] Wood's short biographies, on the other hand, though well-organized accounts of his subjects' careers, lack Aubrey's detail, humor, and insight. They suggest that brevity without a psychological focus may make for a valuable reference work but cannot sustain interest in its own right—we rarely read the *DNB* for the sheer pleasure of it.

In the *Life of John* Roger combines elements of these various genres to create a brief life that continues to fascinate despite the subject's minimal reputation. The particularity and complexity of the character analysis work together to present a convincing portrait of a real individual while remaining consistent enough with accepted notions of how people "really" are and act to convey general insights into human nature. That Roger North knew very well what he was doing is clear from the self-consciousness with which he admits his limitations and

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describes his strategy in the life's first sentence: "My design in these papers is to frame a short history of the life of an honourable person, not long since deceased, and to represent his character as near to truth as my stock of materials will enable me."[14] North promises first to be brief; his intention to write a narrative is indicated by his calling the work a "history."

His primary purpose, however, is to focus on an individual personality, "to represent his character." North goes on to explain that he would not willingly allow his brother to "be wholly forgot and lost, or perhaps *nomine tenus* only, confined to a petit cycle in some musty genealogy" (95). He wishes to preserve not just a name and dates but those things which never appear in genealogies and, if not written down, would disappear. With no need to defend his subject—unlike Francis and Dudley North, John was never involved in public controversy—Roger seems intent on simply being accurate. Representing John's character "as near to truth" as possible, however, does not preclude any moral purpose because Roger is convinced that John, if accurately portrayed, will serve as an "example of virtue" (95).

North could not have imitated the biographers Johnson refers to in *Rambler* 60, those "who imagine themselves writing a life when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferments."[15] North writes: "It hath not been in my power to gather up the precise times of all the passages of this life which I have mentioned, and for that reason I could not write it chronologically as I desired" (95). Out of necessity, then, he adopts an informal format, proceeding "in a style of familiar conversation, and as one engaged to answer such questions concerning our doctor as may be obviously demanded" (95). The book's marginal headings, intended to provide "formal distribution and subdivision of matters" (97), indicate the kind of questions North anticipates: "His opinion of books in general" (105); "His religious and moral character" (143); "Some singularities in his humour" (137).

The advantage of this structure is that it allows a biographer freedom to insert additional information and analysis nearly anywhere within the narrative framework. For example, Roger knew very little about John's years as a student at Cambridge—he began in 1661, his tutor was a Dr. Cook, he studied hard. At this point Roger breaks off:

> At present we will leave him to his studies, and retreat a while to consider his natural temper and propensities, such as of one kind or other all men living have, and which came into the world with them, and are in their power to alter no more than complexion or stature (102).

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Following a discussion of John's natural timidity, including an anecdote describing his encounter with a towel which he believed was a ghost, Roger resumes: "But now to recover our doctor, we find him at Jesus College settled in a fellowship, which he procured not long after he was capable" (104). North makes frequent use of this device: he pauses at various points to discuss John's attitudes toward his fellow collegians, his love of debate and argument with his friends, and his "perpetual thoughtfulness." In this way North interweaves character analysis and narrative, combining the best of Aubrey and Wood.

The passages of analysis are effective because Roger places his subject before readers directly, in concrete and specific detail, rather than in the form of a generalized summary similar to the ones which typically comprised the concluding character in Renaissance and eighteenth-century lives.[16] North relies on the significant detail—what creative writing teachers seek to elicit each time they repeat, "show, don't tell." John Burke, describing Johnson's theory of biography, makes the same point: "The business of the biographer is to select those details that matter. . . . The biographer must keep an eye out not for trivia, but for the significance of the trivial."[17]

A significant detail, Burke explains, is one which "encourages insight into a man's inner character."[18] Like many biographers, North finds significance in physical details. John's face "was always tinted with fresh colour, and his looks vegete and sanguine," Roger writes:

> But his flesh was strangely flaccid and soft, his going weak and shuffling, often crossing his legs as if he were tipsy. His sleep seldom or never easy, but interrupted with unquiet and painful dreams, and often nocturnals, of which (to his intimate friend) he sometimes complained. The reposes he had were short and by snatches; his active spirit had rarely any perfect settlement or rest (139).

Like Catiline's walk ("now quick and again slow") in which Sallust discovers an active and violent mind, John North's shuffling walk, his soft flesh, his disturbed sleep—all are physical manifestations of inner traits: his oddity—the differences which kept him isolated from others —his weakness of character which prevented him from carrying out his plans or even living actively in the world, and his mental turmoil.

Just as revealing is John's "desire for a good library." Roger recalls John's belief that a good library was indispensable to a man of learning, but it becomes clear that John was attracted by more than ancient knowledge:

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> He courted as a fond lover all best editions, fairest characters, best bound and preserved. If the subject was in his favour (as the classics), he cared not how many of them he had, even of the same edition, if he thought it among the best, either better bound, squarer cut, neater covers, or some such qualification caught him. . . . He said that the black italic character agreed with his eyesight (which he accounted but weak) better than any other print, the old Elzevir not excepted, whereof the characters seemed to him more blind and confused than those of the other (106).

John's love of the physical book shows not only his "fastidiousness" but also his fondness for the trappings of a scholar's life and his inability at the same time to admit that his interest was anything but practical.

Roger adds detail after detail of this sort, such as John's "one petit entertainment in his study besides books," his keeping of spiders in tobacco jars (109–10), and his fear of the dark:

> . . . he durst not trust his countenance above the bed clothes. For some time he lay with his tutor, who once coming home found the scholar abed, with only his crown visible. The tutor (indiscreetly enough) pulled him by the hair, whereupon the scholar sank down, and the tutor followed, and at last with a great outcry, the scholar sprang up, expecting to see an enorme spectre (103).

It is easy to imagine the delight with which Lytton Strachey seized upon these details when writing his own brief life of John North. Roger's son, Montagu, who edited the *Life of John* before publication, deleted some of the most revealing anecdotes, which are restored in Peter Millard's edition. Montagu did not want the public to know, for example, that his uncle believed "he should certainly live to be blind" and "reflected much on the case of Milton, who was a wit, and lived to be blind" (141). These details function cumulatively; together they form a vivid and complex portrait, sometimes comic, sometimes disturbing, often surprising, but always convincing.

A collection of details, however, no matter how brilliant or vivid or revealing in themselves, does not alone make for an aesthetically or intellectually satisfying biography. Aubrey's practice confirms this. Readers expect a biographer to exert his intelligence, to select and present the details according to some organizing principle whether implicit or explicit, in a word, to interpret. Geoffrey Wolff describes the biographer's task as two-fold: to show what the subject did (presentation), and to explain why (interpretation).[19]

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Roger's explanation of John's character and conduct includes both nature and nurture. He was, first of all, born physically weak: "When he was very young and also as he grew up, he was of a nice and tender constitution, not so vigorous and athletic as most of his brothers were" (98). In Roger's view John inherited a temperament which was "reserved and studious" in the extreme: "If any thing seemed so early amiss in him, it was non-natural gravity, which in youth is seldom a good sign" (98). With these natural tendencies, John neglected his body's needs and overemphasized his mind's development, widening the gap between his physical weakness and intellectual power: "He kept himself bent with perpetual thinking and study, which manifestly impaired his health" (108). He was "a martyr of study" (141), proof that it is dangerous for a man to engage "his mind as almost to forget he hath a body, which must be waited upon and served" (108). Had John enjoyed music or exercised or cultivated other interests, Roger believed, he might have reversed or at least slowed his painful decline. As it was, however, Roger attributes John's illness and early death to his austere course of life.

Roger knew very well, however, that it was not only John's physical nature that had to be accounted for; he was writing a character sketch, not a medical case study, and many of John's quirks could not simply be attributed to a weak constitution, poor diet, or lack of exercise. John spent the majority of his time alone, conversing only with his books, and when in company, although capable of wit and charm, was never at ease, "for he could not be pleased with such insipid pastimes as bowls, or less material discourse such as town tales and punning" (108). He became progressively more isolated and withdrawn from human contact. There is both humor and pathos in the anecdote describing John's discomfort when making his only visit to the parish in Wales to which he was preferred as a sinecure: desiring to travel incognito, he was discovered and "forced" to receive the tokens of the parishioners' esteem and affection; he had to "submit" to a round of entertainment and then "got him back to his college as fast as he could" (118). Roger's belief, expressed several times in the *Life,* that John would have been happier if less sober, is a recommendation not of drunkenness but of convivial social interaction of which wine is the symbol.

According to Roger's interpretation, John's life may be morally useful in at least two ways. First, it is a kind of negative exemplum, illustrating the dangers of an overly studious and retired life. Second, John

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may be viewed as a model of a number of admirable qualities—"a bright example of orthodox religion, learning, justice, and good will" (162)—who suffered from a single infirmity and labored to overcome it: "all that can be required of a wise and good man is to know his foible and strive to correct it" (142). Seen in this light, John North was more than anything else a victim whose life ought to evoke sympathy and pity. He was a person, Roger writes, "who, like a flourishing fruit tree, blossomed fairly, and then underwent a fatal blight that destroyed fruit and tree altogether" (127).[20]

II

If, as Ralph Rader maintains, the source of a biography's effect may be the subject's career or character, the Life of *John North* should be grouped with those lives which interest readers primarily because the personalities they portray are fascinating in themselves.[21] Though one element may predominate in any particular life, both are necessary in the writing of a genuine biography. For Roger North to construct even a sketchy narrative framework for his study of John's character was by no means an easy task. John simply did not accomplish very much. Roger was familiar with the outline of his brother's modest career: he was a fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge; Master and Professor of Greek at Trinity; Clerk of the Closet to Charles II; and a prebend of Westminster. But beyond this list of preferments—the stuff of which encyclopedia entries, not biographies, are made—Roger could produce very little evidence to substantiate his claim that John was a "bright example" of anything.

John's failure to produce any lasting work was not caused by a lack of intellectual ability or of effort. His typical day, as Roger describes it, was devoted almost entirely to study, interrupted only by morning prayer, "a meagre dish of tea," chapel, and supper; even his evening conversations were "in a studious way" (150). His mind, Roger assures us, was able to penetrate the "dark recesses of learned antiquities, languages, and philosophy" (127). The problem was an excessive "niceness" which Roger traces to his brother's natural timidity:

> This niceness of our doctor, being so very severe as it was, had an unlucky turn, by keeping back the closing of any work. He never thought it complete as it should be, and would do all himself: invent, consult, compare, digest, and transcribe, and never used any amanuensis or copier. And by this means (as will be showed) the public lost the fruit, and he the credit of all his labours. He had a ready, clear, and significant

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style, and wanted nothing but what many have too great a share of, confidence and assurance of himself (133).

The character of a scholar endlessly planning grand projects, compiling sources, perfecting his style, but completing nothing should be familiar to readers of eighteenth-century English literature. Here is another description of the same type:

> He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.[22]

The similarity between this character sketch by Samuel Johnson and Roger's portrayal of John is noteworthy not as evidence of any influence; no one has been able to determine whether or not Johnson read North, and, in any case, the portrait could just as easily have been drawn from life. Rather the parallel is significant because of what it suggests about Roger's handling of John's life. That Roger, so often called a commemorative biographer, should adopt the same point of view and display the same ability to expose human folly as the Rambler indicates that his relationship to his subject is far more complex than may appear.

Roger's treatment of what has been called John's "unproductive erudition"[23] resembles Johnson's presentation of characters both in specific traits and in tone. John, for example, is a victim of the dangerous pleasures of the imagination. When the mastership of Trinity was conferred upon him, he "possessed, as he thought, all the ease and content he could by any means propose to himself" (120). The position, John soon discovered, brought neither ease nor content:

> But oh, the difference of a private condition and magistracy. . . . After this preferment, than which nothing could have more nicely suited his desires and ambition, he fell under such gnawing cares and anxieties that he had small joy of his life, and it was really shortened thereby (120).

There is Johnsonian irony also in Roger's account of John's attitude toward time: "He was a notable husband of his time, and contrived to make his very scraps and intercalary minutes profitable" (107–08). Filling even the minutes between dressing and dinner with study, John, who found thirty-eight years too short a time to complete a sin-

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gle project, would exclaim, "it was pity to lose any of his time" (108). Further one finds in Roger's description of John's illness the same sort of grim irony Johnson practices so often in the *Lives of the Poets*.[24] Despite all his precautions, John suffered none of the disorders he feared, "but somewhat else, and of what he had no imagination or dream" (150)—a stroke followed by paralysis. John's mind, which he cultivated at the expense of his body, suffered, making the illness even more devastating, "for nothing could come near[er] the quick with him than a distemper that insulted his faculties of reasoning and judgement" (150).

One way, then, to make sense of John North's life and to find a pattern in its events is to view it as yet another example of the vanity of human wishes, a study of one man's self-delusion and the suffering it brought. How aware Roger actually was of this possibility, however, and how intentional his irony, is open to debate. But whatever his intentions, the irony is present in the life, if only as an undercurrent. At the same time there is another view of John's life which Roger quite intentionally presents: John as blighted fruit tree, a positive rather than negative exemplum, one who labored admirably under his handicaps. To present this interpretation convincingly, Roger needed some evidence of John's superiority.

North's strategy is to focus on what John would have accomplished had he enjoyed better health and a longer life. Making the most of meager materials—notes which survived the burning of John's manuscripts, scraps of conversation which Roger recalled from years before—he creates the impression that John accomplished more than he actually did. The result is a rarity in biographical writing—long stretches of narrative written almost entirely in the subjunctive.

A single surviving notebook provided Roger the opportunity to examine several of John's intended projects. He admits that it is disorderly—"such *extempore* scraps must needs carry many defects"—but claims that it nevertheless may "demonstrate the tendency of his designs and studies" (135). These notes are arranged by Roger into four groups: divinity, criticism, philosophy, and politics. The notes on philosophy, Roger claims, were to lead to "writing the history of the antique philosophy, with a comparison of the ancients one with another and of all with the moderns, which had been a work the greatest scholar might have been proud of" (136). In several cases Roger includes not only a description of the intended work but also an abstract. Of John's intended refutation of Hobbes, for example, Roger

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gives a summary which covers three pages, briefly making the points John planned to cover:

> As, for instance, against the opinion that the state of nature is a state of war, he opposeth demonstration that it is otherwise, being a state of pure amity and innocence. And against the having no right to anything, or (which is the same) that in the state of nature every man hath right to everything, he opposeth that, if right be not the first thing in nature, there can be no right at all in the world, for laws cannot bind unless it was right before they were made, that, when made, they should bind (136).

By the end of the summary, a reader may easily forget that these are only expanded notes rather than a description of a completed work.

Even without notes to flesh out, Roger speculates further on the monuments of learning John planned and would certainly have carried out had he only lived longer. The doctor was nothing if not ambitious:

> I am well assured that he intended to compose a critical history of philosophy and philosophers, with the originations, connections, transitions, and alterations by the dogmata, and also of the several sects, how they sprung up one under another, comparing their nostrums, and showing wherein they agreed and disagreed, with their squabblings and altercations. And so coming down so low as his own time, to show how the moderns had borrowed from the ancients, and what they had set up new of their own (131).

This study represented only one of the interests John intended to pursue. Following his only published work, a small edition of Plato, John wished further to champion his philosophy in order "to draw the scholars off from their rigid attachments to Aristotle" (128). In the field of political philosophy, he intended, in addition to his refutation of Hobbes, a study of republican government ("the worst of tyrannies under a mask of liberty"), including a history of the Athenian republic, and a discourse on natural justice (132–33). In theology, he proposed to write "a history of the gentile theology" (131). Grand as these designs are, Roger was convinced that they would not have exhausted John's genius, for "his mind was always full of various matters, which often in discourse broke forth from him, and were such as, if he had lived, might have proved subjects of useful treatises" (132–33).[25]

On a purely practical level, Roger succeeds admirably in sustaining any kind of narrative at all in the *Life of John.* He builds on a short list of preferments—the only major "events" of John's life—and expands,

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digresses, and interweaves analysis and description, and, in doing so, manages to present what seems like a full record of a life of thirty-eight years. Concerning Roger's account of John's scholarship, it is interesting to note that John succeeds: he has the projects assigned to him as if accomplished, yet he never had to complete them and risk the censure provoked by imperfection.

III

Roger North's writing of the *Life of John* would have been much easier if only his brother had been a bit more cooperative. By being a writer who wrote so little, John unintentionally shifted his biographer's main activity from research to speculation. Beyond this, John did whatever was in his power to make Roger's task difficult if not impossible:

> Despair had the greatest influence, and it sat so hard upon his spirits that he desired rather to be utterly forgot than that any memorial of his dealing in literature should remain to show that such a one as he ever existed, which should not be proof against the teeth of the next ages (138).

John, therefore, on his deathbed extracted a promise from Francis North, whom he designated his executor, "to burn every writing of his own hand left behind him" (134). Roger remembers that John would not be "satisfied without a solemn promise." And so, after John's death, "all his critical notes, lectures, sermons, animadversions, treatises, and discourses of all kinds, perfect (if any were so) and imperfect, useful or not, went altogether in lumps as innocent martyrs to the fire" (134). John even resisted the efforts of a visual artist to preserve his image. Though he was "much courted, and invited" by Sir Peter Lely, John "would not endure that a picture should be made of him" (138).

While John desired—and actively sought—to be forgotten, Roger's primary motivation in writing the life in the first place was his wish to preserve his brother's memory. The biography, Roger writes, is an "endeavour to retrieve his character" (94). The desire to leave to posterity some sign that a particular human being lived is, of course, at the heart of all biographical writing. All biographers, simply by committing a life to writing, attempt to achieve this end.

The desire to preserve what otherwise might be lost was especially strong in the seventeenth century. It is judged by John Butt to be one of the central "impulses" in the works of writers as different from each other as Sir Thomas Browne and John Aubrey.[20] Roger did not just

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partake of the spirit of the times; he seemed to have his own compelling reasons to preserve everything he could pertaining to his brothers. Within a rapidly changing world, John Morris writes, Roger "is there resisting the power of time to transform the world . . . by treasuring up in writing the characters of his brothers . . . he attempts to withstand the forces of dissolution."[27] His biographies, writes Peter Millard, "are an attempt . . . to rescue his brothers from the oblivion into which they seemed to be sinking with dismaying speed."[28]

In an unpublished letter to Francis North's son, Roger described one motive for writing his brother's life: "I shall Gain an exquisite Pleasure in Reviving the Ideas of my happy time when he lived."[29] Roger found the act of writing enjoyable in itself, describing in his autobiography what a pleasure it is "to sit, as I do now, passing the pen from side to side of the paper."[30] It is especially enjoyable when the subject is one he is particularly fond of, whether music or his brothers. Besides wanting to have the personal joy of recollection, Roger wished to preserve the memory of John to benefit his family—a familiar motive in the seventeenth century. "I think it not reasonable for me to let such an ornament to his family . . . be wholly forgot and lost," Roger writes early in the life, because the times in which he lived seemed to value a family's reputation less and less:

> . . . since the honour, nay the continuance, of families seem to be slighted and unregarded, and since titles and estates seldom distend a line of above three generations, which makes pedigrees good for little but to maintain titles to lands and tenements at law, and the remembrance of persons and families good for nothing at all (95).

To defeat the march of time, to revive pleasant memories, to add an ornament to his family—these are Roger's reasons for preserving a record of John's life, reasons strong enough to make Roger disobey his brother's wishes.

These opposing motives—John's desire to be forgotten, Roger's to preserve him—set biographer and subject in an antagonistic relationship. As detective and culprit, one attempts to discover what the other has concealed. One of the finest of modern biographical detectives, Leon Edel, calls attention to this aspect of biography when he claims that the methods of a good biographer resemble those of Sigmund Freud and Sherlock Holmes as he searches for his subject's "hidden personal myth," what Edel calls "the figure under the carpet."[31] Daniel Aaron assigns the biographer much the same task while noticing how uncooperative subjects occasionally may be; the biographer,

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he writes, attempts "to penetrate the veil of unconscious or calculated deceptions most people hang between themselves and the world."[32]

That potential subjects of biographies should resist the efforts of their biographers seems only natural. Even if they do not, like John North, seek to leave no record at all, most would prefer not to have their personal myths exposed, much less made the subject of a book. Likewise, the biographer's need to simplify and clarify, apparent even in Edel's assumption that there is only one figure under the carpet, insults a subject's sense of his own complexity. No one wants to be explained so neatly. Viewed in this light, hostile reactions to biography by its potential subjects become more understandable. George Eliot called it "a disgrace of English literature," Vladimir Nabokov considered it "psycho-plagiarism," and W. H. Auden found it "always superfluous" and "usually in bad taste"; Thackeray, Arnold, and T. S. Eliot —all ordered their heirs to prevent the writing of sanctioned biographies.[33] Edel can muster little sympathy for these reactions of potential victims; they represent, he believes, only "personal misgivings."[34] These comments may express a desire for privacy, but not in the usual sense: a privacy not so much of fact as of essence.

This tension between biographer and subject is present throughout the *Life of John.* Just by writing the biography, Roger refuses to honor the final request of John, who "would not endure that a picture should be made of him." Although Roger worked in a different medium from Lely, his purpose is the same—to pass a portrait on to posterity. Concerning John's papers, Roger admits feeling torn between being a good biographer and a faithful brother: "It had been a shrewd temptation to have snapped a parole or trust, to no account prejudicial but of the fire" (138). Interestingly, "snap" a trust seems to be exactly what Roger did, though he nowhere confesses it. He explains how he acquired a single notebook, describes John's fear that it might "fall into unknown persons' hands," and includes John's imprecation written in the book: "I beshrew his heart that gathers my opinion from anything he finds wrote here" (138). Still, the notebook somehow survived—it is Roger's source of knowledge on John's academic projects —yet it is explained only with a marginal gloss: "A petit notebook escaped the flames" (134). The lack of a human agent in this sentence represents perhaps Roger's unwillingness to admit responsibility for saving the notebook contrary to John's wishes.

In his preface to the *Lives,* Roger recommends the keeping of a journal mainly because it makes the task of future biographers easier:

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> Whoever hath a mind either his family or the public should profit by his example, and would be known to posterity truly as he was, ought to keep a journal of all the incidents that may afford useful remarks upon the course of his life (78).

From the point of view of a man like John, here is the detective asking for more clues. Without this kind of information, Roger admits, an accurate representation cannot be achieved: "the monuments of the subject" are necessary for a good life history (80); memory is only a frail substitute for written records (78) and there is a question of how well one person can ever know another:

> But it is no wonder so few lives are tolerably wrote, when it is considered that men often change their residence, company, and manner of living; and there is seldom or never any one person that can answer for the whole life and actions of any man, but however friendly and intimate they were, there is removing, absence, employment, or somewhat that hinders a continual notice of his actions, determinations, and occurences (78).

Given Roger's determination to write John's life in spite of these seemingly insurmountable obstacles—a lack of written "monuments," a fallible memory, limited personal knowledge—one may conclude that Roger's desire to preserve John was stronger than his desire to do justice to his character.

This tension between Roger and John North represents only one version of a conflict which seems inherent in the writing of any life. If friendship is often a motif of intimate biography as William C. Dowling suggests,[35] so too is a certain antagonism. In almost every biography there are two plots: the first involving the subject's struggles to achieve his goals and to discover himself in the world; the second, generally less obvious, involving the biographer's struggle to succeed in his task despite the resistance of his subject. If this is, in fact, a structural principle of biography, there should be certain predictable effects which may be traced in specific lives.

As this conflict becomes more prominent in a life, the emphasis shifts from the product—a neat and satisfying narrative and interpretation—to the process—the biographer's attempt to achieve it. Roger North perhaps more than any biographer before Boswell, calls attention to the biographical process, stopping to discuss his goals, techniques, and problems. The effect is even more apparent in Boswell. He not only reflects on biography and his own methods (his desire to

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create a Flemish portrait, willingness to verify dates,) but also becomes involved as a biographer in the life he is writing. The dinner with Wilkes, for example, is, in part, about Johnson: his reaction to meeting Wilkes and how he conducts himself. At the same time, though, the episode is about the biographer's attempt to get his subject to do something which will make a good story and, therefore, enhance his biography. The overcoming of Johnson's resistance just to attend the dinner, Ralph Rader observes in his analysis of the scene, is an important part of the comic action's resolution.[36]

If the writer of a life emphasizes his own struggle with his subject the result may be considered "metabiography": biography which is about the writing of biography just as "metafiction" describes novels and stories about the writing of fiction. A biography may focus almost exclusively on the process of writing a life. A. J. A. Symons' *Quest for Corvo,* for example, is organized around the biographer's search: his initial discovery of and fascination with the subject, his research, and finally, his tentative conclusions. He actually discovers relatively little; Corvo remains an enigmatic and elusive figure.

Symons' *Corvo* suggests that another effect of emphasizing this tension in a life may be a shift in readers' sympathy. Northrop Frye argues that the criminal in detective fiction is actually a hero in an ironic phase of literature:

> The detective story begins in the Sherlock Holmes period as an intensification of low mimetic, in the sharpening of attention to details that makes the dullest and most neglected trivia of daily living leap into mysterious and fateful significance. But as we move further away from this we move toward a ritual drama around a corpse in which a wavering finger of social condemnation passes over a group of "suspects" and finally settles on one. The sense of a victim chosen by lot is very strong, for the case against him is only plausibly manipulated.[37]

The same may be said of the biographical subject being stalked by his biographer, whether the "suspect" is John North or Johnson or Corvo. It is natural when reading to wonder how one's own life would bear up under such close scrutiny.

Canisius College

NOTES

1. Lytton Strachey, "The Life, Illness, and Death of Dr. North," *Portraits in Miniature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1931), p. 30.

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2. Roger North (1653–1734) also wrote lives of two more brothers: Francis, a lawyer and judge who served as Lord Chancellor under Charles II; and Dudley, a merchant and economist who earned a fortune in Turkey and is credited with formulating the law of supply and demand. Known collectively as *The Lives of the Norths,* these biographies were published in 1742–44 and have come to be recognized as landmarks in the development of English biography. They are treated briefly in the older critical histories; see, for example, Harold Nicolson, *The Development of English Biography* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1925), pp. 74–76; and Donald A. Stauffer, *The Art of Biography in Eighteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1941), pp. 354–69. More recently John Morris has studied the *Lives* as autobiography, "Roger North: A Brother's Life," in his *Versions of the Self: Studies in English Autobiography from John Bunyan to John Stuart Mill* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), pp. 39–67. P. T. Millard and James L. Clifford have examined previously unknown manuscript versions of the *Lives* along with a critical preface and have concluded that North, both in his theory and practice, was a sophisticated and surprisingly modern biographer, one deserving further study; see Millard, "The Chronology of Roger North's Main Works," *RES,* NS 24 (1973), 284–93; and Clifford, "Roger North and the Art of Biography," in *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature: Essays in Honor of Alan Dugald McKillop,* ed. Carroll Camden (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1963), pp. 275–85.

3. Sir Sidney Lee, *Principles of Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1911), p. 15.

4. Mark Longaker, *English Biography in the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Univ. Press, 1931), pp. 184–85.

5. Lee, p. 10.

6. *The Rambler,* ed. W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss, 3 vols. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), I, 320.

7. "Semiprivate Lives," in *Studies in Biography,* Harvard English Studies 8, ed. Daniel Aaron (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1978), p. 123.

8. Strouse, p. 123.

9. Peter Millard, ed., *General Preface & Life of Dr. John North* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), p. 26.

10. "Minor Lives," in *Telling Lives: The Biographer's Art,* ed. Marc Pachter (Washington: New Republic Books, 1979), p. 58.

11. *The Theophrastan Character in England to 1642* (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1947), p. 22.

12. Millard, *General Preface & Life of Dr. John North,* p. 15.

13. *One Mighty Torrent: The Drama of Biography* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p. 74.

14. Roger North, *General Preface & Life of Dr. John North,* ed. Peter Millard (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), p. 94. Subsequent references will be included parenthetically in the text.

15. *The Rambler,* III, 322.

16. Robert Folkenflik provides a concise summary of the special function and features of these summary character sketches and describes how, in skilled hands, they may complement the narrative portion of a life in *Samuel Johnson, Biographer* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 100–01.

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17. "Excellence in Biography: *Rambler* 60 and Johnson's Early Biographies," *South Atlantic Bulletin,* 44, No. 2 (1979), 16–17.
18. Burke, p. 17.
19. Wolff, p. 68.
20. Other interpretations, of course, are possible: the same details may be examined in light of a new set of assumptions and be presented from a different point of view. The result is a new life, or, in the case of Strachey's "The Life, Illness, and Death of Dr. North," a brief life.
21. "Literary Form in Factual Narrative: The Example of Boswell's *Johnson,*" in *Essays in Eighteenth-Century Biography,* ed. Philip B. Daghlian (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1968), p. 6.
22. *The Rambler,* IV, 349.
23. Edgar Johnson, p. 93.
24. See Paul Fussell's chapter on *The Lives of the Poets,* "The Irony of Literary Careers," *Samuel Johnson and the Life of Writing* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1971), pp. 246–78.
25. Had the *Life of John* been published in the form Roger intended, still more of it would have been devoted to John's scholarly interests. The final manuscript version includes a long digression entitled, "a dissertation of the new and moderne philosophye." This discussion of Newton and Descartes, supposedly representative of John's thinking, was deleted by Montagu North and has been restored for the first time in P. T. Millard's edition.
26. *Biography in the Hands of Walton, Johnson, and Boswell,* Ewing Lectures, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1966), p. 2.
27. Morris, p. 64.
28. Millard, *General Preface & Life of Dr. John North,* p. 13.
29. Quoted by Millard, *General Preface & Life of Dr. John North,* p. 14.
30. The *Autobiography of the Hon. Roger North,* in *The Lives of the Norths,* ed. Augustus Jessop, 3 vols. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1890), III, 198.
31. "The Figure Under the Carpet," in *Telling Lives,* pp. 24–25.
32. Preface, *Studies in Biography,* p. vii.
33. Quoted by Edel, p. 21.
34. Edel, p. 21.
35. *The Boswellian Hero* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1979), p. 117.
36. Rader, pp. 23–25.
37. *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), p. 46.

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Review

CHARLES NICHOLL, *A Cup of News: The Life of Thomas Nashe.* London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984. 342 pp.

> "This is the lamentable condition of our times,
> that men of art must seek alms of cormorants."
> —*Pierce Penilesse* [1592]

By virtue of his occupation the Elizabethan pamphleteer was something of a furtive character. Especially those, like Thomas Nashe, who had a knack for making social discontent fashionable; whose writing instigated as it entertained; whose targets included radical Puritans, other disenchanted literati, sometimes the power of government itself. Their artistry was not exactly what Sir Philip Sidney had in mind when he urged authors to "teach and delight," and so the pamphleteer's trade brought only short-lived influence, the risk of retaliation, the threat of imminent starvation. It is no wonder that the few men who made it a lifetime career were driven by a literary fever that thrived on polemic, performing their art with a cunning and a perseverance unknown to most poets or dramatists of the period. Even then it took a special kind of person to enjoy airing his dirty linen (and everyone else's) in public when he knew he'd be looking over his shoulder for some time thereafter. In fact, the real personal danger lay not in the initial effect of a pamphlet, volatile though it may have been, but in the aftereffects which so frequently outlasted the writing. By contemporary standards a book three months old was already too old. Yet reputations seemed to cling forever, and it was an era in which the public memory was unrelenting. Great reputations hung on greatly, and an impoverished reputation hung on greatly as well, though in a very different sense. At best a pamphleteer could hope to be labelled innocuous; however, more commonly he was cast in the most disparaging terms. One thinks of the anonymous letter-writer to the Privy Council protesting Gascoigne's admission to the position of burgess of parliament, his complaint registered long after Gascoigne's pamphlet-writing days had ended: "he is a notorious Ruffianne and especiallie noted

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to be bothe a spie; an Atheist and a godlesse personne." Among other things a pamphleteer knew that the sins of youth returned in later years, and not without consequence.

In the wake of such precarious circumstances it is necessarily the man we seek. For *who* would become the willing prisoner of his own controversy? And *to what end* does an individual participate so openly in a narcissistic drama that advertises his vulnerability? Thomas Nashe never changed his name or assumed a mysterious identity. Nor did he hide from his past. His was a life lived flat out; which doesn't mean, of course, that he is easy to understand. There is little in the way of psychological evidence to be found in his work although we do perceive a very tangible "self," and it is largely the selfsame personality throughout. Perhaps, then, the central question of Nashe's life-history asks why it has taken biographers so long to recognize their subject as unique unto himself instead of using his prose as an example of this or that social tendency. Partly, as Charles Nicholl demonstrates by implication, they have simply been misled by the beaten path. The rest of the explanation depends on Nashe's changing self-presentation and his sense, as with all writers of the avant-garde, of having to draw his public through novelty, strangeness, surprise, even scandal. A biographer in search of the "whole man" faces a collage of Thomas Nashes, while the "real" Thomas Nashe lies buried in the grey area between the personae of his pamphlets and the rejoinders of his opponents. Nowhere does he stand still as a distinct individual, but he emerges most believably as a personality. Now what better position for a writer who intended to challenge his opponents on his own terms? But on the other hand, how willing are we, as readers, to accept a biographical portrait that knows no stasis? Nevertheless, one is forced to make allowances in order to comprehend Thomas Nashe at all, whether in bas-relief or more fully. The fact is that his personal and artistic life were both self-styled mysteries, fleeting shadows calculated to deny inquirers the clearly-outlined profile. Confusion was just exactly what he wanted.

It was in 1588, following a six-year stay at Cambridge, that he decided to go down to London. His friends, Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe, had done it before him and, as the other University Wits, we can only deduce that wit alone had gotten him to university in the first place, for the son of a Suffolk parson had no particular advantage in background or inheritance. Once having arrived in the hopeful city, however, Nashe soon learned that his education was of no special benefit. He was out of place among "the disorderlie Babel of buildings." Around him merchants greedily gathered up "all the welth of the land in their snap-haunce bags" while the poor scholars "wander in back lanes and the out-shiftes of the Citie, with never a rag to their backes." Not all the cries of London were optimistic. They ran the gamut from shopmen ("What do ye lack?") to sixpenny whores, to beggars and abject prisoners—"the cries of the damned in the Fleet." Still, Nashe's Cambridge connection gave him immediate contact with young men in similar circumstances—also stalked by disillusionment—who were "gentlemen" by title and learning, but were ill-equipped to rise above that station to the ranks of profitable employment. (With the exception of the-ater, no literary venue was well-organized enough to provide a livelihood.) Encouraged by their devastated aspirations, and in part-rebellion against the respectability of their background, they gravitated to the shabby suburbs of Shoreditch. True, Nashe eventually learned how to incorporate the dingy surroundings, the claustrophobic back-chambers of squalid rooming-houses, into his Bohemian prose. Yet the reality of his hardship was a persistent reminder of his failed expectations. He became an embit-

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tered cynic, and a shrewd guttersnipe: "let me but touch a peece of paper, there arise such stormes and tempestes about my eares as is admirable."

Most of all he came to appreciate the adversarial game. That is, he simply enjoyed fighting; it stirred the poison in his blood. From his earliest attacks, especially those on Puritan militants involved in the Marprelate controversy, it is clear that Nashe took a bemused interest in the weaknesses of his enemies. Worse yet, he enjoyed poking at wounded victims. Once angered he was relentless in his pursuit, no holds barred. If Nicholl is correct, he would have us believe that Nashe was happiest playing the bothersome gnat, having no altruistic pretense to reform. "We want an Aretine [as Pietro Aretino, the noted Italian satirist] here among us," Nashe said, "that might strip these golden asses out of their gaie trappings." Consequently, it would be easy to underestimate the sincerity of his annoyance, not to mention the severity of his attacks. Nevertheless, while "State matters" were clearly off-limits to his juvenile lampoons, the young man's commitment to satire as a convenient vehicle for serious debate was genuine enough to last a lifetime. His railings against Ramus's theories of logic, in preference of Aristotle's, were couched in a more all-encompassing defense of university education and poetry and, ultimately, in a lament for the decay of knowledge. To Nashe, the Puritanical supporters of Ramus had one end in mind: making education serve practical, utilitarian ends. As he saw it, they despised humanistic learning because it was unprofitable and, furthermore, because it encouraged immorality. In the final outcome this placed social responsibility in the hands of the financially successful, but they were uncharitable and had little sympathy with higher virtues, fellow feeling, or respect for learning. About the actual possibilities for social reform Nashe was skeptical; however, he held strong intellectual prejudices all the same, and he was adamant that they be carried over into the realm of social conscience.

Still, for all his conviction, his reticence is more apparent, and this is the ruling ambivalence in his personality. Throughout *A Cup of News,* the sense one gets of Nashe is of a very clever man, but a man not quite clever enough. His literary associates—Robert Greene, Christopher Marlowe, perhaps William Shakespeare—outshone him in the literal sense. They preferred to air their beliefs in drama, on stage, to a wide public. They were critical of much, but they managed to comment discreetly, knowing that the limits of power (extending theoretically from the people to the monarch) were fictitious. In fact, they realized that the actuality of politics required the fiction of poets and dramatists. In contrast, Nashe who, by favoring the pamphlet, could have been more openly inflammatory, chose the less-assured route, frequently disguising allusions and innuendoes. He found entertainment at personal or inter-personal cost, but his was also a more grudging personality than Greene or Marlowe. He wanted intensely to be listened to, yet without every reader being able to identify his every opinion. Time and again he played with the *risk of identification,* almost in fear of fullblown success. Therefore, in Nicholl's account Nashe is not an example of "greatness gone awry" or "wasted potential" but of near-greatness, always second in the strides of others, a tendency finally more dwarfing and dangerous than protective.

The man Nashe followed most closely was Robert Greene, the most popular writer of the 1580s. With his "running head" and his "scribbling hand" Greene set styles and tastes through the sheer volume of his work. Pastorals, history plays, whatever was in fashion Greene wrote. It was he who gave Nashe his first important exposure by allowing him to write a preface to *Menaphon* in 1589. Not only that, but Greene

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provided a personal example for the fledgling author. It was Greene's versatility, timeliness, and devotion to learning that Nashe emulated. Unfortunately, he copied his restlessness, wantonness, and schizophrenic character as well. Or possibly this is why they—and the other University Wits, notorious rakehells—understood one another. For Greene had enemies aplenty, equal to his friends, and he expected his friends to take up their pens against them in support of his cause. Foremost among Greene's opponents were Nashe's friend from Cambridge days, Christopher Marlowe, and Marlowe's friend, Thomas Kyd. The thrust of their disagreement concerned the current vogue of Marlowe's dramatic style, described by Greene as bombastic and arrogant. However, Nashe restricted his attack to Kyd, thus avoiding his central personal dilemma. The exchange ended soon thereafter, and through some twist of fate (probably contrived by both sides) the controversy spun itself out to the mutual benefit of all the rivals. Not that it was a fraud in terms of true rivalry; anything but that. Rather, it was overplayed for its potential publicity. Marlowe and Greene knew well how to finagle the media in terms of their own advertisement. "A good quarrel got them talking at Paul's, stoked the *enfant terrible* mystique" as Nicholl asserts (p. 53). This was the foundation on which the entire group of "Wits" rationalized their discontent and rested their claims to brilliance. They impersonated the familiar type of self-promoted genius—creative, troubled, alcoholic, and essentially insecure, self-pitying. Their extremity became their hallmark, and an excuse for the satiric vein which is so often the resort of the disillusioned outsider. Hence it was that Greene, Nashe's "sweet friend," led the troublesome group that came to include John Lyly, Thomas Watson, George Peele, Matthew Roydon, and Thomas Lodge. They were writers in search of an image, trafficking in a society that concurrently touched the underworld and the nobility. They found an elusiveness in the example of Robert Greene, the scholar, paid literary assassin, and gentleman-rogue.

The freedom assumed by the Wits threatened government officials and competing writers alike. Before Greene died in September 1592, he warned Nashe of the libel he would inherit as a result of their long association. His caution notwithstanding, Nashe seems to have been caught somewhat off-balance when Gabriel Harvey (Greene's ancient enemy) initially styled him "Greene's fellow-writer" and subsequently turned his attack on Nashe's "Grammar-schoole witte." It was not, however, Nashe's friendship with Greene alone that motivated Harvey's annoyance. More pressing evidence weighed in his favor, namely Nashe's attack on Harvey's brother Richard in *Pierce Penilesse,* wherein he called him "a great babound" and "a shame-swolne toad." These wounds had been festering for many years. Actually, it was Richard who started the Nashe-Harvey feud back at Cambridge where he, in the post of University Praelector in philosophy, earned a reputation as a "violent partisan of Ramus" (p. 34) and a crazed prognosticator. Apparently the students then thought the worst of his teachings. They must have hugged themselves with joy when, to Richard's embarrassment, his predictions of dire events proved false. Nashe called him "the Pigmie Braggart"; Greene found him a "vaine glorious asse"; and, in Nashe's words, "Kit Marloe was wont to say that he was an asse, good for nothing [but] to preach the Iron Age" (p. 35). Despite Harvey's surprisingly-controlled retaliation Nashe responded with harangues that showed him in a poor light. His essay entitled *Strange Newes* champions the satirists' rights and applauds linguistic and stylistic agility (as essential argument from Nashe's point of view), but it is immature in its polemic. Frequently he stoops to ridicule and abuse, turning name-calling into an art. In essence, the dispute was another

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war of personalities between two men whose horns were locked in equal conviction. And we ought not to be fooled by the relative "civility" of Harvey's outbursts either. One need not understand their qualms in intimate detail to recognize that they were temperamentally equal. Even a cursory reading of their exchange leaves us wondering: Which was the devil? Which the deep blue sea?

Nashe's connection with Shakespeare is more tenuous, but more intriguing. *The Taming of the Shrew* and the Falstaff comedies are replete with "stylistic and atmospheric echoes" of Nashe (p. 203), but it seems to be with Master Moth in *Love's Labors Lost* that Nashe shows the greatest similarity. Nicholl suggests that as a young writer in the 1590s Shakespeare would have looked at the Wits as the most fashionable London coterie. He shows his first intrigue with them in the *Shrew* in which the witty railers ape their social manners and their distinctive habits of speech. Nicholl finds that indeed many of Nashe's own specific linguistic peculiarities surface there (p. 205). Part of the fun of the play was Shakespeare's invention of Sly as a "mock Lord Strange" (more on his relationship with Nashe later), drawing attention to Lady Strange's reputation as a "shrew," an opinion confirmed also by her second husband Sir Thomas Egerton (p. 207). Later, these same allusions were manipulated with a heavier hand in *Love's Labors Lost*. "With Strange at its heart, Shakespeare's spoof . . . takes up the same humorous anti-occultist territory as Nashe in *Pierce Penilesse*" (p. 211). So if Moth is Nashe in costume, then his master Armado must be Gabriel Harvey, and the fictionalized situation "a comic envisaging of Nashe and Harvey reconciled" (p. 219). Nicholl builds upon this theory in locating additional allusions—to George Chapman, John Florio (the linguist and lexicographer), and Hugh Sanford (the Countess of Pembroke's secretary)—as an indication that Shakespeare knew Nashe well. He sees in Nashe's description of a "friend" an allusion to Shakespeare. Nashe's mask for him is casual and genteel, and reflects Shakespeare's supposed knowledge of the Nashe-Harvey antagonism:

> A gentleman, a frend of mine, that was no straunger to such bandyings as had betwixt us, was desirous to see how he [Harvey] lookt since my strappadoing and torturing him: in which spleene he went and enquird for him (p. 220).

That was Chettle's first impression of Shakespeare too: "his demeanour [was] no lesse civill than he [was] excelent in the qualitie he professes" (p. 220).

Less confident were Nashe's relationships with patrons through whom he could procure a short-term living, as well as information for his pamphlets. During the summer of 1592, Nashe was kept by Lord Strange, also a supporter of Christopher Marlowe. In return, Nashe rounded off *Pierce Penilesse* with a panegyric of "thrice noble Amyntas," assumed to be Strange (p. 80), and produced a bawdy poem *The Choise of Valentines*. By September of the same year, Nashe had relocated his loyalties, this time at Croydon with Archbishop Whitgift. There he composed his first play, *Summers Last Will and Testament*, probably for a performance in the Great Hall in the first week of October. Nashe remained in the Archbishop's service until the end of the year, following which he moved to Conington, Huntingdonshire, to the manor of the scholar Robert Cotton, where he was staying by February 1593. Soon afterwards he shifted his pen again, this time dedicating *The Unfortunate Traveller* to the Earl of Southampton, the young nobleman whose patronage is enshrined by his support of William Shakespeare. By the autumn of 1593, Nashe altered his allegiance for the final time, now to Sir George Carey and his family. They were the most influential

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and wealthy benefactors Nashe would find; and this was the arrangement that worked to Nashe's greatest benefit. (It just so happened that Lady Carey was sister-in-law to Lord Strange, Nashe's patron during the previous year.) To Lady Elizabeth Carey he dedicated *Christs Tears Over Jerusalem;* to her daughter, *Terrors of the Night.* By the fall of 1594, though, he was on the road again. This was the employment pattern of a "paid wit." Yet more importantly we recognize certain overriding characteristics in his patrons that coalesced later in Nashe's personal downfall: many were Catholic sympathizers, some flirting with witchcraft.

Nashe's second venture into drama—his collaboration with Ben Jonson on *The Isle of Dogs*—was to be his most fatal move. It was in 1597 when the play was reported to the authorities as a "lewd plaie" marked by "seditious and sclanderous matter." They did not appreciate the "imperfit Embrion of my idle houres," Nashe stated (p. 243). In consequence, Richard Topcliffe, chief of Elizabeth's secret police, had three of the principal players arrested, including Ben Jonson. The Swan Playhouse was closed and Nashe's lodgings were searched and his papers seized. Somehow he managed to escape. Because no copy of the play survives, it is impossible to determine exactly which of its contents were inflammatory. Surely it reached the highest level of the political machine. Nicholl reads contemporary remarks about the nature of the play as hints at the Queen's differences with Lord Cobham (William Brooke) and the religious controversy involving his predecessor Sir John Oldcastle.

The title of the play brings to the forefront the association of the Isle of Dogs with the combination of sewage and courtly abuse, "an England of bestial struggle and capitalistic 'dog eat dog' " (p. 247). The year 1597 was especially distinguished by economic crisis and social upheaval; Nashe, as we understand from his juvenilia, was outraged by social injustice and the lackadaisical wealthy; and by this time the Oldcastle legend had become a religious sore spot, treasured by Protestants and maligned by Catholics. Nicholl's hypothesis makes good sense in the framework of what we know about Nashe and the tendencies of contemporary controversy. Throughout his work there is always the faintest tinge of Catholic sympathy—obligations to the Catholic Howard family; involvement with Strange and the Earl of Southampton; constant invective against the Puritans, against Leicester and Ralegh; collaboration with Ben Jonson (a known Catholic). Too, there were his other liaisons, and Nicholl cunningly avoids a pressing question: was Shakespeare a Catholic? Any Oldcastle satire would seem to be a logical extension of his Falstaff comedies. In April 1597 the Chamberlain's Men played a new version, *The Merry Wives of Windsor,* at the Garter Feast at Whitehall. Their patron, Sir George Carey, was receiving the Order of the Garter on that occasion, and previous rivalry with Lord Cobham had already turned the two men into stiff competitors for several high offices.

For all his trouble Nashe was left half-mad, abandoned by the public he never quite trusted to be faithful, but whose favor he sought none the less. His final desolation had been long in coming. During the summer of 1593 he produced the wrenching, apocalyptic lament *Christs Tears Over Jerusalem,* a pathological cover-up for what appears to have been a nervous breakdown:

> My heart ranne full-butt against my breast to have broken it open, and my soule fluttered and beate with her ayrie-winges on every side for passage. My knees crackt and the ground fledde back (p. 169).

Following this he was forced to endure civil persecution (motivated by Harvey), the reason for which is still unclear. For better than a year, midway through 1595 to the

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summer of 1596, Nashe was silenced, again for unknown causes. Perhaps the dark side of his personality emerged. The vestiges of an explanation suggest that he slipped into hiding in St. Faith's Church, the parish church for the Stationers and pamphleteers who had undergone religious conversion. Throughout this period the London haunts he knew were still the gathering spots for his friends and enemies although they must have milled around without him during his silence.

In the next three years Nashe's isolation prevailed. *Lenten Stuffe* appeared in the spring of 1599, prompting Archbishop Whitgift to issue a series of orders in his capacity as chief censor. He called in various "unsemely Satyres & Epigrams," and then decreed:

> that all Nasshes bookes and Doctor Harveyes bookes be taken wheresoever they maye be founde, and that none of theire bookes bee ever printed hereafter (p. 264.)

This banishment from the public eye was effective. After 1600 the traces of Nashe are few. The causes of his death are unknown, as is his exact death date. Two epigraphs written for him appear in 1601: one at Oxford by Charles Fitzgeffrey; the second, by an anonymous author, a fellow alumnus at St. John's, Cambridge. Of the circle of Wits, only John Lyly and Thomas Lodge outlived him.

Despite its vague outline we can feel the pulse of Nashe's life clearly: a man who identified the underworld and then the "underworld in high places"; a writer who could appreciate the grotesque, in art and life, but could not produce it; an individual seemingly out of place in every setting. If there was one major displacement Nashe labored under, we must finally attribute it to the professional structure he fought against. Essentially he was a hard-edged journalist in a day before newspapers. No existing medium could accommodate his interest or capabilities. While he enjoyed tilting at impossibility and risk, overall he had little instinct for self-preservation. Nicholl's excellent biography is careful to articulate these traits. This Nashe is not the personality too often thought of as the taunting commentator on London's street life. He is a very crafty writer, indignant and scornful with just reason, a victim of his own studied hatred, the fool (and beggar) of false patronage:

> For Nashe inveged bitterly (as he had wont to do) against dry-fisted Patrons, accusing them of his untimely death, because if they had given his Muse that cherishment which shee most worthily deserved, hee had fed to his dying day on fat Capons, burnt sack and Suger, and not so desperately have ventur'de his life, and shortend his dayes by keeping company with pickle herrings.
>
> (Thomas Dekker, *A Knight's Conjuring,* 1607)

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CYNTHIA HUFF

From Faceless Chronicler to Self-Creator: The Diary of Louisa Galton, 1830–1896

William Gass is one of the many male writers and contemporary critics who defines art in sexual terms. In *Fiction and the Figures of Life* he comments that

> ordinary language ought to be like the gray inaudible wife who services the great man: an ideal engine, utterly self-effacing, devoted without remainder to its task; but when language is used as an art it is no longer used merely to communicate.[1]

Gass wrote this almost a century after Louisa Galton was composing her unpublished *Annual Record,* which was intended to be a tribute to the accomplishments of her husband Francis Galton, an eminent Victorian scientist.[2] However, Gass's metaphor defines the role Louisa was expected to assume, that of the inarticulate and mechanical wife who serves the genius, whether sexually or linguistically; and the connections between Gass's definition of literature and Louisa Galton's prescribed role as the chronicler of her husband's achievements indicate the inferior status often ascribed to women and their writing, particularly their composition of diaries.

There seems little doubt that Louisa was expected to serve her husband as the scribe who recorded his successes for posterity, a role she inherited from the women in Francis's family. From birth Francis Galton was groomed by his family, particularly its female members, to be a scientific genius. According to his biographer, the young Galton's education and nurturance were the focal point of his mother and four

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sisters' existence, as they each defined themselves largely according to the role they played in his development.[3] Francis's eldest sister, Elizabeth, served as his surrogate mother from the time of his infancy until her own marriage, and after this his older sister, Emma, nurtured Francis.

But Elizabeth bequeathed yet another and equally important legacy to Emma. Originally the recorder of the family history, Elizabeth passed on this duty as well. The family records of the Galtons noted the significant events of communal life such as births, deaths, and marriages, and their maintenance by the female members defined the roles the sisters were to play in the family mythology. R. D. Laing emphasizes the importance of certain stories for the reaffirmation and continuance of family structure, since mutually agreed upon interpretations provide the cues which direct the actions of each family member.[4] In the case of the Galton family, Elizabeth and then Emma learned their roles partly by acting as the keepers of the family history. Both Galton sisters served the family mythology by acting as its inarticulate chroniclers. Although Elizabeth's record has apparently been lost, Emma's has not, and an examination of it helps to untangle the role of women as scribes in the Galton tradition and elucidate too the weight of the familial text Louisa Galton must have felt after her marriage to Francis.[5]

The focal point of Emma's record is the paterfamilias: first, her father Samuel Tertius Galton, and then Francis. Samuel Tertius Galton, like his father, was interested in science, and Francis's destiny was, it seems, to fill the place occupied by his grandfather and father, though the youngest male Galton was expected to achieve greater scientific eminence than his predecessors. The role Francis was to play in the family mythology and the ordering of that story within the familial text were the primary concerns of Emma Galton once she inherited the nurturance of Francis and the inscription of her brother's history.

Emma's rendition of the line of inheritance stands out in the familial text she wrote. Her record does not proceed chronologically, but associationally, and the starting point for her first train of associations is her father's death in 1844, even though the earliest events Emma mentions occur in 1829. Emma's entries are generally brief and rather oblique, but she carefully notes the details of her father's death: its place and exact time, the day on which the corpse was removed from the family home, and the date of the funeral. The death of Samuel Tertius Galton altered the familial configuration both spatially and psychologically. The family coach was sold; Elizabeth and Adele Galton

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married; and the remaining women in the family left the patriarchal household.

The changes within the family structure are reflected in Emma's record, particularly in her use of the word "blank." Emma often composed her family record by quoting others, as she does when she cites Elizabeth's letter to her aunt in which Elizabeth characterizes the impact of her father's death:

> Yet none but his children can know what a daily, what an hourly loss he is to them. All our occupations and pleasures were so connected with him, that everything now seems a blank and it will be a very long time before we shall cease to be constantly reminded of him in everything we do. [p. 1]

The use of the term "blank" to indicate death and a severing of familial connections appears frequently in the journals and correspondence of many of the Galtons.

Although deaths, especially of men, often instigate and order diaries written by nineteenth-century British women, in the case of the Galtons death was another catalyst as well. Death brought about a blank space both within the family structure and within the familial text. As inarticulate chroniclers the women in the Galton family were expected to fill in space, to inscribe the blank by relating the history of a new patriarch. Emma played her role accordingly. Once her father died she transferred the focus of the family history to Francis, its heir, and retold in a slightly different refrain the story of the scientific prowess of her grandfather and father.

The familiar and familial story, however, gained in stature and refinement. Francis Galton was heralded by his contemporaries as well as by his family, and it must have seemed only fitting to his dutiful sister Emma that the pages of the family history primarily record his achievements. Emma died before her prominent brother; and her rendition of the family record always focused on him. She commented on *his* scientific pursuits and achievements, *his* journeys abroad, *his* illness and recovery in 1852, and *his* marriage to Louisa. Other family members are mentioned in Emma's account and she relates some details about herself as well. Still, Emma remains in her role as the inarticulate scribe who lauds the heir's achievements. She does not dwell on the publication of her own book, *The Unprotected,* where she gives financial advice to unmarried women, nor does her account express her own fears and anxieties, her hopes and wishes. She remains in the background, merely a player in the family drama, a

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minor part of the family record whose voice is subsumed by the "we" of the collective narrative. Against this backdrop Francis stands out.

Emma inscribed the family mythology and the successes of Francis in one volume, just as her sister Elizabeth had before her. Convinced of her son's intellectual prowess, Mrs. Galton maintained yet another volume containing the biographical record of the first eight years of his life in which she detailed Francis's development and accomplishments. Like her daughters, Mrs. Galton was merely the recorder of the patriarch's power, merely a woman who thought of herself and her family in relation to her eminent son. Apparently she expected her new daughter-in-law Louisa to place herself in this position as well, for it is in the volume where Mrs. Galton recorded her son's early years that Louisa Butler commenced her *Annual Record.*

When Louisa, the daughter of a former headmaster of Harrow and Dean of Peterborough, married Francis Galton in 1853, she was expected to serve the great man by chronicling and assisting his development. She did so, at least initially, for at the time of her marriage Louisa filled in the yearly gaps between the end of Mrs. Galton's biography of her son and her own marriage to him. Louisa began her *Annual Record* by composing a retrospective survey which included only brief details for the years 1830 to 1834. But from 1835 until the year of their marriage Louisa wrote slightly longer accounts of her own and her husband's lives on separate pages, labeling one "Frank's Life" and the other "Louisa's Life."

What is most interesting and revealing initially about Louisa's *Annual Record* is the form it takes. Louisa did not backdate her yearly entries to correspond with her birth, but rather to match the record of Frank's activities; hence she started the account in 1830, the year Mrs. Galton's biography of her son ends. Louisa designated the left-hand page as Frank's and the right-hand page as hers; and significantly, when she composed the entries on Frank's page she assumed different voices. In some of the entries referring to Francis, Louisa called him by his Christian name; at other times she assumed his voice and wrote "I"; and sometimes she deleted the subject. Louisa, whether consciously or subconsciously, appears to be struggling with her designated position as the gray inaudible wife, for at times she subsumed her identity by adopting that of her husband and lived vicariously through him. Even in this early phase of her role as mechanical chronicler, though, Louisa chafes against the boundaries imposed by familial expectations and by the tradition of the familial text as a vehicle in which women serve others by memorializing their achievements. Cer-

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tainly Louisa's deletion of the subject signifies her resistance toward becoming Francis. When she refers to him by his Christian name she maintains a distance between herself and her husband by symbolically refusing to merge her identity with his and become a mute chronicler.

Louisa's sense of herself as an individual and her opposition to the ideal of service symbolized by the role of inarticulate chronicler asserts itself rather quickly. At first her accounts of Francis's youth are more complete than her own, but as the record nears the year of their marriage this process is reversed. Louisa's earliest entries are brief and associational and follow the tradition adhered to by Emma. But when she begins to record the events of her life more fully the short phrases are replaced by full sentences. Furthermore, when Louisa first enters a joint account for the newly-married couple, she does so not on Frank's page, but on her own. It seems clear that as Louisa jotted down the summaries of Frank's life and her life between 1830 and 1853, she decided that hers was as valid as Frank's, perhaps more so, and that their union did not belong under Frank's jurisdiction as symbolized by his page, but rather under hers. This decision was not a momentary one on Louisa's part, as the entries for the four years after their marriage are written on Louisa's page, the right-hand one. Finally, beginning in 1858, Louisa uses both the right- and left-hand pages to detail her life with Francis.

Louisa's symbolic altering of the familial text was an important decision. By creating a blank space where the entries for Frank's life were to have been she began psychologically to re-evaluate her relationship with her husband and his family and to define in her own terms the familial script she would create. Although her decision was probably not a conscious one, Louisa did, nevertheless, assume the power to utilize the space within the familial text as she saw fit when she chose to express nothing on Frank's page, to say nothing through his voice. This act was the first step in her quiet challenge of the primacy of the patriarch's life within the familial record and her first assertion that her own voice was not entirely muted by the acclaim of her husband's scientific prowess.

But if Louisa escaped somewhat from the confinement imposed by her role as the faceless and voiceless recorder of her husband's successes, she continued to use her *Annual Record* to register the achievements and activities of her extended family. Louisa never had any children as she was expected to, but like other unpublished nineteenth-century British women's accounts, hers records the life-events of a family, such as births, deaths, and marriages. These life-events

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assume more significance than they might otherwise because her diary is yearly, not daily. It is obvious from reading the entries written shortly after her marriage that her family is important to Louisa, for she does not give over the tradition of recording family events in favor of chronicling her own.

In fact her *Annual Record* seems to move from focusing on Francis to centering on her extended family. Such a practice was in keeping with the ideal of service enjoined for women in the last century, since it too placed them in the background, rather than the foreground, and hence confined their expressive impulses within socially defined limits of conduct. Even though Louisa was not submerging her voice and her identity in her husband's, she was defining herself as part of the family setting. By inscribing her own part within the context of a familial story Louisa was playing the role traditionally assigned to nineteenth-century British women: namely, to consider their conduct and their lives in relation to others rather than to laud their own accomplishments. Louisa's 1859 entry typifies this tendency, for here she refers to the visit of her sister-in-law, Emma, and the election of her brother, Montague, as headmaster of Harrow, as the principal events of the year. In 1869 Louisa first mentions her illness, the theme which characterizes the second volume of the *Annual Record* and establishes her confinement from ill health.

But this foreboding is overshadowed by family matters, for the yearly entries between 1870 and 1874 are dominated by Louisa's accounts of familial grief and concern, specifically the deaths of her own and Francis's mothers and the anguish occasioned by Emma Galton's operation. In 1872 Louisa details the death of her mother by noting the exact number of days between the onset of her illness and her death, its cause, and the setting for the funeral. Such specificity was a common practice in nineteenth-century British women's journals whenever the diarists recorded life-events of any kind, and surely this habit caused the diarist to view herself as merely a part of a large detailed picture composed of familial events. In 1873 Mrs. Galton died, and in her 1874 yearly summary Louisa characterizes the impact of this familial event: "Uneasy from the very beginning about dear Mrs. Galton, Frank went to see her early in Feb^{y} & she died Feby 12th aged 90. This coming so soon after my dear Mother's made a sad blank, both houses gone." Such an entry shows that Louisa's identity continued to reside at least partly within the family structure, and presages too the note of loss which characterizes much of Louisa's record, especially in her later years. Yet the cessation of both houses

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frees Louisa somewhat from the constraints imposed on the chronicler of family records. The blank space brought about by death allowed Louisa more latitude for self-expression, probably because the ties within the extended family structure were loosened.

Almost immediately Louisa began to inscribe her story of the familial text left vacant by Mrs. Galton's death. Louisa may have felt freer to create her own place within the family mythology once her mother-in-law died precisely because the older Mrs. Galton helped initiate Louisa into the position of inarticulate scribe, thus re-enacting the relationship of Francis and his mother. However, the 1874 entry indicates that Louisa had no intention of playing such a part, and furthermore that she wished to modify her relationship with her husband. In the autumn of 1874 Louisa was confined to her sick room. But instead of chafing against the strictures occasioned by illness, Louisa writes of the peace and happiness she experienced. Although she mentions that friends and relatives solaced her, the main source of comfort she notes is Francis. His care of her made Louisa feel "sustained by love." Here Francis is serving his wife, whose illness paradoxically allows her some escape from the familial designation of the wife who effaces herself to assist the great man. Louisa's confinement from sickness gradually becomes a major theme in the second volume of the *Annual Record.* Instead of being trapped within the boundaries mapped out by the Galton family configuration and the text which legitimized and perpetuated her subservient position, Louisa instead began to inscribe her confinement onto the text, thus making her own story as much a part of the family history as her husband's scientific discoveries.

Louisa inscribes the second volume of her *Annual Record* "A Continuation of Our Yearly Summary," but in many senses the "our" is a misnomer, since the second volume tells her story more than Francis's or her family's. Beginning a new book helped release Louisa from the Galton family tradition of chronicling, which the first volume symbolized. The tone of the second volume is more personal, as are the themes of her entries. Instead of seeing herself as part of the family drama, Louisa begins more and more to view others in relation to herself, and specifically in relation to her declining health.

Physical confinement becomes for Louisa both a restriction and a liberation. Louisa Galton's confinement derived as much from age and ill health as from the constraint of nineteenth-century women's spheres, and she poignantly realizes that she no longer has the social opportunities of a young woman. In 1878 when Louisa is fifty-six years old she writes:

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> A year of no great mark for ourselves and families. My health has gone on improving, but greatly narrows our life or rather lives, as I lose so many opportunities of making friends & of mixing myself with the stirring interests of the day by refusing all dinner invitations and yet I am so much stronger that I always hope I shall be able to resume old habits, still years go on.

Louisa's ill health resulted from problems with her stomach and sphincter, which were constricted to only a fraction of their normal size at the time of her death. Her maladies brought her much discomfort, as her record attests, yet they also caused Louisa to be more introspective, partly because she was prevented from attending social functions. As she becomes distanced from the public world, her record increasingly assumes the tone and texture of a personal, inner-directed diary. Louisa writes more and more about herself, and hence her diary moves from a mere rendition of events to a consideration of her intimate relationships. Although she is confined physically, she is no longer imprisoned as inarticulate, for she speaks in her own voice about her own concerns. As her health deteriorates it becomes the fulcrum on which the familial record pivots.

By 1883, when Louisa was sixty-two, she was writing more and more frequently that there are "few events to record," but paradoxically her entries become longer as she increasingly uses the *Annual Record* to validate her existence and provide her with the self-esteem she feels she is losing as she ages. Her friends and family die, and Francis becomes increasingly deaf; and although the diary never ceases entirely to be a record of Francis's accomplishments and family activities, she turns to it more and more as she might to a friend, thus transforming it from a recording of occurrences outside herself to a rendering of her feelings.

The entry for 1883 is especially significant, since it indicates the diary's primary function as Louisa's psychological support, and establishes the pattern of the entries. Throughout her married life, Louisa's existence was ordered to correspond with Francis's intellectual pursuits, and generally her concerns seem to have meant little to him. Hence she uses the *Annual Record* to voice her problems with servants, and more and more to write of her frustration and her sense of loss and doom. Her 1883 entry keynotes this tendency, for here Louisa tells us that "events for me are fewer and fewer as health impedes my doing much," and proceeds to relate the "frightful blow" she experienced because of her two sisters-in-law's deaths. The very act of

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expressing her feelings in the *Annual Record* allows Louisa to cope with the disintegration of her family through death and to prepare herself for death as well. Even when Louisa relates public events, these seem to reflect the melancholy tone of her personal life. In 1878 when Francis is ill, Louisa is suffering acutely, and their friend Mr. Gurney dies, she writes: "There is a good deal of distress & depression, many failures of Banks." Ironically enough, Louisa develops a self through preparing to lose one, as she consistently views the outside world in terms of her own sense of disintegration and confinement.

One way she does this is through poetic descriptions. In her entry of 1882 she personifies the fog in an almost Dickensian manner by speaking of how it "brought on my pain & kept me in its grasp more or less for 6 weeks." Louisa here seems almost obsessed with her struggle against confinement as she expresses how the weather hampers and controls her through determining her physical condition. In much the same way Louisa considers herself governed by servants. In the same entry she mentions the joy she experiences because she has been "free from cook embroglios." Louisa's utterances are not always so directly linked to home events or to her illness. Even a short journey can evoke emotions of abiding demise. In her 1892 entry Louisa describes a trip to Leamington as "a chill autumnal day, wind wailing, dead leaves falling, decay all around of what had been." Louisa's ability to characterize her environment in terms of her own sense of dissolution simultaneously confines her and frees her from confinement. Throughout the latter part of the second volume of her *Annual Record* Louisa's tone and imagery clearly presage death; but it is this very preoccupation with the inevitable decay of all things which helps free Louisa from the restraints of her prescribed role as family chronicler and allows her to recreate the familial text in her own image.

As Louisa nears death her entries change in significant ways. Primarily they began to assume a definite closure, though too she chafes at the dependency her physical disabilities occasion. There seem to be several reasons for the latter. First, problems with her stomach prevented Louisa at times from traveling abroad, a pleasure she felt freed her from the irksome obligations of supervising servants. Travel to the sunnier climates of Europe also improved Louisa's health, and the contrast between the dark, confining atmosphere of England and the light, invigorating ambience of Switzerland and Italy becomes a staple in her account. The older Louisa gets, the more she seems to want to escape the stays of life, and the more she desires self-sufficiency. She

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chastises herself occasionally for her inability to serve others because of her debilitating health, but the reason for her unhappiness derives less from any desire to adhere to her expected role as the gray, inarticulate wife whose identity is determined by fulfilling obligations, than from Louisa's insistence that she not cause trouble and hence be bound to others through her sickness.

The final entries in the *Annual Record* indicate Louisa's preparation for death and her realization that she is in a transitional period between the confinement which ill health and her familial role represent and the awesome yet thrilling freedom which the future holds. As Louisa anticipates the future the years seem shorter, and in 1890 for the first time her entry exhibits closure. The ending of the 1890 entry quietly invokes Louisa's sense of finality, but it is her 1891 entry where she writes that she "feel[s] our life closing in & the dim great future looming ever & ever nearer." Louisa begins to address God at the end of each entry and her closing prayers to Him show her solemn preparation for death.

Louisa, however, dreads that death will take her unawares or create obstacles, for she painfully reflects upon the consequences of "what may come to either of us after 44 years of happy union" [1894]. She fears too that she will quickly by replaced by another. In her final entry of 1896 Louisa writes: "Darwin announced his engagement to Miss Cumberland, which gave me a pang to think how soon a dear life companion could be forgotten for the sake of comfort & companionship." Still, as Louisa realizes only too poignantly, change and replacement are inevitable. Her final remarks in the *Annual Record,* which refer to the death of a valued friend, have a Biblical ring: "So surely do good good things come to us & pass from us." In her *Annual Record,* however, Louisa mitigated against her own oblivion. She chronicled not her husband's life, as she was meant to do, but her own, and even her acutely distressing thoughts about death indicate the strength of a woman who faced the boundaries of her existence.

Not only are Francis's achievements displaced by Louisa's intimations of mortality, but the very framework of the Galton family record has been rehabilitated by Louisa. The form of the 1883 entry definitively establishes the pattern of Louisa's yearly recordings in the second volume. Louisa begins her summaries by describing her illness and her reactions to it in some detail, and only later does she mention family activities or her husband's work. Once Louisa has detailed her illness she writes of her travels, usually on the Continent; and it is sig-

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nificant that this follows her descriptions of illness, since Louisa realized that escaping the confinement of the damp English climate was tantamount to enjoying better health. Louisa's choice of subject matter, her placing of personally relevant topics in the primary positions, and her inclusion of more material about herself than about others, indicate that the *Annual Record* becomes no longer the chronicle written by the gray inaudible wife, but rather a portrait of a woman hemmed in by confinement but escaping from it, by telling her own story and alloting herself a major role in the familial script.

Perhaps the best evidence to support this interpretation comes from Francis Galton. When he was asked by a publisher in 1907 to write his autobiography, he told a relative: "I *have* Louisa's diaries, but they refer little to myself."[6] Louisa's last entry is for 1896, and Francis continues the Annual Record only one more year. In it he writes of Louisa's death, but the greater memorial to her is his perhaps unconscious following of the pattern she had established. Like Louisa, Francis writes first of her poor health. Ironically, Louisa's fatal illness occurs abroad, and Francis follows his comments about her decline with details about the symptoms which result in her death. Remarks about Louisa's debilitated condition make up the bulk of the entry, just as they did when Louisa kept the family account. Only at the end of the 1897 entry does Francis mention family activities and his own work. Francis's adherence to the ordering of the entries created by Louisa signifies, albeit momentarily, that the *Annual Record* is not so much the tribute to the great man, but instead the rendering of the ways in which an unknown woman defined herself.

Louisa Galton's *Annual Record* stands as an exemplum of the restrictions placed on women who write and of the means which can be used to break through these restrictions. Even though women have traditionally been assigned the role of chronicler, not of creator, by critics such as Gass, Louisa Galton, like other nineteenth-century women diarists, created her own story by taking possession of the familial text which was designed to memorialize others, especially men. Nor was she atypical when she chose not to limit herself to the role of the gray inaudible wife, for other women of the last century also worked within and overcame the constraints of the familial record to emerge as creators of their own stories. Their success indicates our need to uncover the stories of these forgotten women, to read their scripts, and to forge the links between their histories and our own.

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NOTES

1. William H. Gass, *Fiction and the Figures of Life* (Boston: Nonpareil Books, 1971), p. 93.
2. DMS Watson Library, University College, London. Galton Papers, Items 53, 55. All further references to Louisa Galton's manuscript diary will be cited in the text by date of entry. Other papers pertaining to the Galton family are also housed in the Watson Library, University College, London. It is worth noting that Louisa Galton's *Annual Record* is one example of a generally unexamined collection of family records written by women. Estelle C. Jelinek in her Introduction to *Women's Autobiography* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980) exemplifies the standard approach to women's autobiographical writings when she emphasizes the differences between the autobiographies composed by men and by women instead of considering the more subtle relationships of the family matrix when a woman composed the family record. As I note in the Introduction to my *British Women's Diaries: A Descriptive Bibliography of Selected Nineteenth-Century Women's Manuscript Diaries* (New York: AMS Press, 1985), p. xvii, diarists frequently use "we" to signal their position as familial scribe; and an examination of the entries listed in the subject index of the bibliography under the heading "Family Relationships of Diarists" suggests how women used the diary to write their stories as well as those of their families. One of the best known examples of a record written for a man but later possessed by its creator, a woman, is Hannah Cullwick's diaries. In her Introduction to *The Diaries of Hannah Cullwick: Victorian Maidservant* (London: Virago Press, 1984), Liz Stanley points out that even though Hannah's diaries were begun as the performance of a duty insisted upon by the author and poet Arthur Munby, and served partly as a foundation for Munby's secret life and his identity, Hannah eventually wrote them more for herself than for Munby.
3. D. W. Forrest, *Francis Galton: The Life and Works of a Victorian Genius* (London: Paul Elek, 1974).
4. For a complete discussion of this concept see R. D. Laing, *The Politics of the Family* (New York: Vintage, 1969).
5. DMS Watson Library, University College, London. Galton Papers, Item 37. All references to Emma Galton's record will be cited in the text by the page of the typescript.
6. Letter, 25 November 1907, to Millicent Lethbridge. Galton Papers (uncatalogued), DMS Watson Library, University College, London.

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Nancy G. Isenberg

Eleanor Roosevelt: Joseph Lash's "Eternal Mother"[1]

She . . . had no peer
Either in our first mother or in all women
Who were to come. But *alone of all her sex*
She pleased the Lord.[2]

—Caulius Sedulius

Eleanor Roosevelt was a person of enormous *vitality.* Her *presence* during the Roosevelt years was *everywhere.* But her real influence was *spiritual,* not one of laws, appointments, the management of great government bureaus. . . .She has moved into the *pantheon* of great Americans whose appeal is *timeless.*[3]

—Joseph P. Lash

The words of Joseph Lash clearly echo the sentiment that Eleanor Roosevelt stands "alone of all her sex." Beginning with his "monumental" study, *Eleanor and Franklin,* published in 1971, Lash has constructed a biographical paradigm which is still considered the authoritative text on the life of Eleanor Roosevelt.[4] One of the most consistent and pervasive themes which Lash develops in his study is the image of ER as the *eternal mother.* For Lash, ER is "timeless," "spiritual," and her every action is invested with some deeper symbolic meaning; her almost godlike "presence" transcends the limitations and weaknesses of mere mortals. Unfortunately, this is more than simply the trappings of modern hagiography. The looming presence of the eternal mother in Lash's text reflects more accurately the problematic nature of how women (or Woman) are portrayed in traditional biography.

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To understand Lash's text, it is important to unravel the hidden meaning and mythic significance of the eternal mother. In her essay, "Women's Time," Julia Kristeva provides some useful theoretical insights which address the cultural and literary role of the "myth of the archaic mother."[5] She has argued that this belief in the "omnipotence of an archaic, full, total, englobing mother" has become the archetypal symbol of the belief in good and pure substance. This myth of the "woman-mother," moreover, is combined with a "monumental" or eternal modality of time, a concept which Kristeva derives from Nietzsche's examination of historical time. This symbolic view of time, which Kristeva argues has shaped the discursive practices of Western civilization, represents the "all-encompassing, infinite space, and cosmic time" found in maternal cults like the Christian myth of the Virgin Mary.[6]

What Kristeva has suggested by the myth of the "woman-mother" is reinforced by the work of feminist theologians like Carol Ochs. By analyzing the cult of Mary, Ochs argues that "Christianity gave a shape and form to the *feminine* aspect through its emphasis on Mary."[7] Like most matriarchal religions, the cult of Mary embodies four basic characteristics of the goddess:

1) The goddess is the mother of god.
2) The goddess is the bride of god (this serves as a heavenly exemplar for human matrimonial relationships).
3) The goddess is a virgin (it encompasses an essential purity which cannot be touched by the exigencies of external fate and is compatible with childbearing).
4) The goddess mourns for the dead.[8]

As other studies have stressed, the mythic significance of the Virgin Mary is that she is "extraordinarily singular"; she combines rare feminine and religious qualities as the bearer of God, for she is "alone without example mother and virgin."[9] Her perpetual virginity and motherhood are reconciled through three privileges or miracles granted to the Virgin Mary: her immaculate conception, her unnatural virgin birth of the Christ child, and her assumption into heaven.[10] Each of these miracles allows the Virgin Mary to transcend carnal sexuality and reproduction, which ultimately elevates her to a higher spiritual femininity, a divine realm totally transcendent, immortal, and completely alien to the physical existence of most women.[11] It is only through her decisive break with sexuality that the Virgin Mary can

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escape the legacy of Eve and assume some level of divine transcendence. Untouched by sin or sexuality, Mary represents the perfect receptacle capable of carrying the presence of God in her untainted womb.[12] Her "extraordinarily singular" purity, as W. Lloyd Warner has suggested, defies the female condition, since she is "without beginning (birth without the human consequences of original sin) and without end (deathless)."[13] Like the eternal mother, Mary can embody the conflicting ideals of virginity and motherhood because of her timeless and essential goodness, an original and transcendent purity which makes her "spotless, perfect, and without sin."[14]

The goddess, like the Virgin Mary, is also associated with certain hidden mysteries. Possibly the most important one is that she appears in three distinct metamorphoses: those of the maiden (virgin), mother, and old woman, but the mystery is that she always remains one, she is always complete and unchanging. When placed within a patriarchal framework, the overall meaning of the goddess is that she reflects the basic duality of womanhood. For example, as Ochs points out, the protecting, nurturing mother is also the devouring mother, and the goddess of life is the goddess of death. Mary preserves this duality by representing the "other aspect of Eve," or the "inversion of Eve." While Eve is the "mother of all that lives," symbolizes matter, and marks all women as cursed, Mary is the virgin, symbolizes spirit, and through her all women are blessed.[15]

In his biography of Eleanor Roosevelt, Lash clearly adopts and replicates certain aspects of the discursive mode of the eternal mother. The following considerations will be addressed to show how Lash's portrayal of ER is a textual construction based on characteristics found in the Virgin Mary. First, in what way is ER portrayed as a transcendent, spiritual, and archetypal symbol of maternal purity and goodness? Secondly, how is ER, through the use of time in the narrative, projected in the text as a complete and unchanging being, despite her evolving character as a child, adolescent, wife, mother, and older adult woman? Thirdly, how does ER reflect a form of virginal purity through her lack of sexual "desire" or sexual identity? Finally, how does ER stand "alone of all her sex" or above the fallibility of all earthly women, particularly those women of the upper-class like her mother-in-law, Sara Roosevelt?

In every biographical text by Lash, ER is portrayed repeatedly as the nurturing mother who assumes her moral and spiritual duty as the caretaker of humanity. As Lash explicitly states in *Eleanor and Franklin*:

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> Fundamentally Eleanor was neither stateswoman, politician, nor feminist. She was a woman with a deep sense of spiritual mission. Like Saint Theresa, she not only "had a powerful intellect of practical order" but was a woman of extravagant tenderness and piety.[16]

This theme again returns in Lash's sequel, *Eleanor: The Years Alone,* where he develops ER's extensive career in politics and reform following the death of her husband. Here ER becomes the personification of "human dignity," a "public eminence," a "woman renowned for her goodness," a "woman of poise, dignity, and gracious beauty," and according to Adlai Stevenson, the "first saint of democracy."[17] Even in one of his most recent studies, *Love, Eleanor: Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Friends,* appearing in 1982, Lash describes ER as a "woman of mercy right out of first Corinthians."[18]

Why does Lash constantly draw upon religious metaphors to explain ER's personality and her approach to social reform? Primarily because Eleanor herself projected this image in her own writing, particularly in her autobiographies, and her contemporaries, like Adlai Stevenson, often ascribed these virtues to her character.[19] Yet, at the same time, Lash reinforces and concretizes this discursive mode, which becomes increasingly apparent in *Love, Eleanor* where he draws a revealing comparison between ER and two spiritual leaders, Gandhi and Tolstoy. Lash suggests that these two moral leaders "fell into crises of faith from which they emerged purified and sanctified," and that ultimately they rejected worldly things as being "meaningless." In a similar manner, Lash contends that ER began to "forge a new personality at whose center were her desires to love and her passion to be of use." Lash also employs the observations of William James from his book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* stating that ER could best be understood as a person who had "an inborn genius" for "spiritual emotions" which served as the "habitual centres" of her "personal energy." These capacities, moreover, clearly separated ER from "ordinary people." Eleanor Roosevelt, then, transcends the normal human limitations of most women, and she patterns her public career as a "service of love" to her husband's goals, to her friends, to her family, and eventually as "First Lady" to the world. For Lash, the textual ER emerges as the englobing mother, the timeless disciple, and the feminine essence of the Christian message: self-denying service as a virgin mother for her child.[20]

Lash constructs his narrative in such a way as to repeatedly remind (and reveal to) the reader the totality of ER's personality. In the open-

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ing sections of *Eleanor and Franklin,* chapters that assess her childhood, adolescence, and early marriage, Lash employs the technique of prolepsis in structuring the narrative. Through the use of prolepsis, Lash divides or splits his narrative discourse into two simultaneous but conflicting modalities of time: 1) the cyclical division of ER's life history stages (childhood, youth, marriage, motherhood, public career as an older adult woman); and 2) the monumental time represented by ER's seemingly universal characteristics and unchanging persona. Although the text appears to follow the gradual development of the subject's identity, it subverts the reader's understanding of a partial identity by signifying the hidden (but clearly dominating presence) of ER's complete and monumental "self." Thus, by structuring the order of his narrative in this manner, Lash endows ER with her "timeless" importance and carefully preserves her monumental significance as a whole and seemingly unchanging "presence."

In addition to manipulating the meaning of time in his narrative, Lash also finds it necessary to invest ER with some aura of virginal purity. As Kristeva has suggested, the eternal mother (or what Lash would describe as women whose "spiritual emotions" are the "habitual centers" of their "personal energy") is portrayed as radically separated from experiencing or understanding "jouissance" or sexual pleasure.[21] It is significant that Lash pinpoints ER's "crisis of faith" at the discovery of her husband's affair with Lucy Mercer.[22] This turning point, followed by self-doubt and depression, Lash suggests, forces ER to "the realization that she could not achieve fulfillment through someone else."[23] And, from this moment, ER begins her "spiritual mission," her "service of love," and her "passion for use." To further reinforce his argument, Lash attempts to deny the emotional or possibly sexual significance of ER's relationship with other women, particularly the "infamous" Lorena Hickok.[24] In *Love, Eleanor,* a book written to address the newly-released correspondence between ER and Hickok, Lash works to incorporate their relationship within his biographical paradigm. To accomplish this task, Lash interprets this material from three points of view: 1) he trivializes the intimacy of their correspondence; 2) he portrays Hickok as a completely undesirable woman who evokes only pity rather than real affection from ER; and 3) he encompasses ER's actions or feelings as merely an extension of her nurturing and maternal care. Within this framework, ER's "schoolgirl" crush on Hickok gradually emerges as simply another example of Eleanor's sense of "duty and discipline that had taught her to transform desire into tenderness, solicitude, and serenity."[25]

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When ER experiences her "crisis of faith," according to Lash, she also begins to transcend the normal human limitations of most women. Throughout the text, Lash points out how ER never really satisfied the conventional standards for Roosevelt women. Unlike her mother, Anna, she lacked feminine qualities, particularly her mother's stunning beauty. ER also lacked the athletic ability or the vibrant personality of her cousin Alice Roosevelt. Possibly the only time in Eleanor's life when she assumes the conventional role of a "young society matron" is during the early period of her marriage.[26] What is most striking about this stage of her life is that Lash explains ER's behavior as a result of "totally subordinating herself to her husband and her mother-in-law."[27] How Lash portrays ER's relationship with Sara Roosevelt is crucial because Sara represents the "other aspect" or "inversion" of the qualities found in Eleanor. Lash consistently associates Sara Roosevelt with all the failings of her class and sex. Sara is the "devouring mother," who is trapped in the material excesses of her upper-class existence, symbolically representing a negative foil—a metaphorical Eve—juxtaposed with Eleanor as the eternal mother. Lash even implicitly casts Sara within the Freudian paradigm of the castrating mother:

> But Franklin was away so often that it was Eleanor who bore the brunt of Sara's interference. The older woman was *motivated by darker, more complicated forces* than overindulgent love of her grandchildren; she was Eleanor's rival for the affections both of the children and Franklin.[28]

Anna Roosevelt, Lorena Hickok, and Sara Roosevelt in many ways represent the fallibility of most women. In stark contrast, ER—as the eternal mother—clearly stands "alone of all her sex." The singularity of Eleanor Roosevelt, like the Virgin Mary, transforms her achievements into feminine powers which are normally beyond the reach of ordinary women. Her spiritual femininity, moreover, not only separates ER from ordinary women, but it represents a form of passive feminine power. Like the Virgin Mary, Eleanor, as the wife of Franklin, is ultimately a mediator and a recipient whose indirect, nurturing, intuitively spiritual nature complements and completes the masculine realm of presidental politics. Symbolically, ER's political influence and power remain meaningful only *in relation to* her husband. This is true even after Franklin's death, when Eleanor's political career is portrayed as fulfilling her husband's unfinished work. What this implies, then, is that ER—enshrined as the eternal mother—becomes a symbol of acceptable feminine virtues, passively reflecting the initiative and will of the male political power structure.[29] The eter-

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nal feminine, like the Virgin Mary, is complementary rather than threatening to the patriarchal order of Lash's biographical universe.

The questions raised by this study are not limited to the life of Eleanor Roosevelt or the particular literary style of Joseph Lash. More importantly, the theme of the eternal mother addresses the problem of how particular women are portrayed as biographical subjects and questions the accuracy, reliability, and the very meaning of "reality" encoded in and by biographical narrative. Like representational literature, biography is a form of writing which attempts to re-present a recognizable historical or psychological "reality" by re-constructing the life of the individual. One of the most basic assumptions structuring all biographical writing is the ideal of the unified life, in which the "coherence" of the conscious subject in the text is assumed to reflect the "natural" order of a life in nature.[30] By constructing the ideal subject and preserving the unity of a "whole life," biography simultaneously eliminates the significance of any possible contradictions which in some way threaten to undermine that ideal.[31]

When considering Lash's biographical paradigm, ER is implicitly (and possibly unconsciously) re-presented through the feminine ideal of the eternal mother. Although Lash attempts to encompass the "recognizable" historical reality of ER's life in his text(s), the life of the "real woman" is distorted by the looming presence of the mythical figure of the eternal mother. At the same time, any possible (or unexplained) disruptions in her life are suppressed by the artificial wholeness imposed by the symbolic meaning and narrative continuity of the eternal mother. By "masking the cultural (or mythical) as the natural," as William Epstein has suggested, Lash's biographical study transforms the life of Eleanor Roosevelt into a life-text of "Woman" as the eternal feminine.[32]

Thus, the underlying message of Lash's text(s) is hardly an original view of Woman: most women share the curse of Eve and all her failings, while only the chosen few—like Eleanor Roosevelt—embody the true spiritual and maternal essence of pure femininity. In the pantheon of great American women, ER forever stands "alone of all her sex."

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NOTES

1. I would like to thank Elaine Marks, and the members of the class in "Reading and Writing Biography," for their intellectual support in writing this paper.
2. Caulius Sedulius, "Paschalis Carminis," Book II, lines 68–69 Sedulii Opera Omnia, ed. John Huemer (Vienna, 1885), quoted in Marina Warner, *Alone of*

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All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1976; reprint ed., New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978): p. xvii. Italics added.

3. Joseph P. Lash, "Foreword," in *Without Precedent: The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt,* edited by Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984) p. vii. Italics added.
4. *Eleanor and Franklin: The Story of their Relationship Based on Eleanor Roosevelt's Private Papers* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1971; reprint ed., New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1973).
5. "Women's Time," in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1981): 13–35.
6. *Ibid.,* pp. 14–17, 29.
7. *Behind the Sex of God: Toward a New Consciousness—Transcending Matriarchy and Patriarchy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977), p. 68.
8. *Ibid.,* pp. 68–69.
9. Penny Schine Gold, *The Lady & the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. 69–71. See also Warner, p. 153.
10. Rosemary Radford Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), pp. 144, 150–51. For a more extended treatment of this subject, see Rosemary Reuther, *Mary—the Feminine Face of the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminister Press, 1977).
11. Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk,* pp. 147, 150–51.
12. *Ibid.,* p. 139.
13. W. Lloyd Warner, *The Family of God: A Symbolic Study of Christian Life in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 302.
14. Reuther, p. 141.
15. Ochs, pp. 70, 80.
16. *Eleanor and Franklin,* p. 517.
17. *Eleanor: The Years Alone* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1972; reprint ed., New York: The New American Library, 1973), pp. 6, 44, 46, 298.
18. *Love, Eleanor: Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Friends* (New York: Doubleday Press, 1982), p. x.
19. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote four autobiographical accounts of her life, beginning with *This is My Story,* published in 1937, followed by *This I Remember* (1949), *On My Own* (1958), and *The Search for Understanding* (1960). This material was compiled and edited in a single volume, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt,* which appeared in 1961. This material has been recently published by G. K. Hall in 1984.
20. *Love, Eleanor,* pp. 144–45.
21. For an explanation of Kristeva's term "jouissance," see Leon S. Roudiez, "Introduction," in Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 15–16.
22. *Love, Eleanor,* p. 144.
23. *Eleanor and Franklin,* p. 325.
24. For a complete biographical account of ER's relationship with Lorena Hickok, which shares, unfortunately, some of the same problems and biases as does Lash's study, see Doris Faber, *The Life of Lorena Hickok: ER's Friend* (New York: William Morrow, 1980).

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Isenberg

25. *Love, Eleanor,* p. 141. For some examples from *Love, Eleanor:*

> Eleanor was forty-nine in 1933, but there is something *schoolgirlish* in this self-portrait of a kiss bestowed upon Hick's photograph with tears in her eyes. (pp. 143–44)

In reference to Hickok's appearance, Lash writes:

> She was squarish, moon-faced, nonathletic. Even as a young woman, she was without sexual attraction. She was five foot eight but weighed almost two hundred pounds. (p. 126)

Lash also dismisses lesbianism as a viable category of inquiry:

> Her relationship to Hickok and the letters growing out of it are unique. But do these letters tell the tale of a friendship touched with lesbianism, *whatever that word may mean?* Or are they the chronicle of a quasi-spiritual figure, the set-apart kind of whom William James dealt with apologetically, lest he be considered sanctimonious? (p. 143) Italics added.

26. *Eleanor and Franklin,* p. 219.
27. *Ibid.,* p. 209.
28. *Ibid.,* p. 273. Italics added.
29. Carol Christ has pointed out the political implications of the passive nature of the Virgin Mary in the following statement: "Patriarchical religion has enforced the view that female initiative and will are evil through the juxtaposition of Eve and Mary. Eve caused the fall by asserting her will against the command of God, while Mary began the new age with her response to God's initiative, 'Let it be done to me according to thy word.' (Luke 1:38)" ("Why Women Need the Goddess: Phenomenological, Psychological, and Political Reflections," in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion,* edited by Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow [New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979], p. 283).
30. This argument has been made persuasively by William Epstein, who has suggested that the biographical life is encoded and re-encoded in and by cultural discourse, and does not mirror or directly re-present the natural order of a life. See "Recognizing the Life-Text: Towards a Poetics of Biography," *biography,* Vol. 6, no. 4 (Fall, 1983): 283–305.
31. David Carroll, *The Subject in Question: The Language of Theory and the Strategies of Fiction* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 65.
32. Epstein, p. 296.

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C. R. Vanden Bossche

Fictive Text and Transcendental Self: Carlyle's Art of Biography

> Nay our very Biographies, how stiff-starched, foisonless, hollow! They stand there respectable; and—what more? Dumb idols; with a skin of delusively-painted waxwork; inwardly empty, or full of rags and bran.[1]

Carlyle's anxiety about the ability of biography to render the authentic self dominates his long career as biographer and critic of biography. This explains why his insistence that the purpose of biography is to render the living presence of human beings is so often taken to be a sure guide to his practice of biography.[2] In his fictitious philosophy of clothes, however, he comes near to suggesting that, as "clothes make the man," self exists only in clothing. Consequently, while he is close to the modernist idea that there is no self apart from that constituted by culture, he insists that the object of biography is to discover an authentic self that does exist apart from culture and history. In his biographical works, the tension between this nostalgic desire and his awareness of the radical inaccessibility of self drives him increasingly toward the "modern" perspective although he always refuses to concede it. A close examination of his discussions of the problematics of representation in biography will demonstrate that, while he insists on the importance of being *realistic,* he practices an art that *fictionalizes,* revealing the biographical object through ironic negation rather than through positive re-presentation.

I

Carlyle, the scowling reviewer, always seems to be striving vainly to wrest the true nature of the individual from a confused morass of biographies. From his first review essay, "Jean Paul Friedrich Richter" (1827), to his final opus, *The History of Frederick the Great* (1865), he

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finds the work of his predecessors wanting. The demands he places on the genre lead one to believe that it is doomed to failure, and shed light on his reluctance to have his own biography written. "No one, he said, was likely to understand a history, the secret of which was unknown to his closest friends."[3] The existence of the "secret" need not be explained through the specific details of Carlyle's past (although his biographer Froude thought, of course, that it was). The "secret life" is secret precisely because it is unique to the individual; it is that which separates oneself from others, an essential self beneath the changing sets of clothing that provide its social identity. For this reason, Carlyle tends to emphasize the originality and uniqueness of figures like Richter, Burns, and Mirabeau as well as the fictional Diogenes Teufelsdröckh (II, 100; I, 274; III, 403–5).

Biography, however, imposes its formal patterns on this essential self, inevitably reducing it and replacing it with the text. Carlyle dismisses most biographies as mere chronologies, compilations, catalogues, and indices. In other words, the linear and partial list is made to stand for the living whole.[4] The biography of Burns, for example, presents only "a detached catalogue of his several supposed attributes, virtues and vices, instead of a delineation of the resulting character as a living unit" (I, 260). Failing to provide the "immortal part" that transcends culture, biography, like ordinary experience, makes available only the historical self manifested through dates and documents. It reduces the self to its clothing.

The conflict between the desire to portray the "genuine man" and the recognition of the inevitable reductiveness of biography does not find direct expression in Carlyle's writings precisely because he wants to maintain his belief in the possibility of a text that reveals rather than conceals the self (I, 260; II, 101; III, 90). Instead, he projects ideal and actual biography onto the biographical object, producing the images of the "popular man" who "shows us a truth which we can see without shifting our present intellectual position" and the "original man" who "wishes to wrench us from our old fixtures, and elevate us to a higher and clearer level" (I, 249–50). The popular and original individuals become the termini of Carlyle's continuum of biographical objects. The original possesses the uniqueness of the essential self; the popular individual exists only in history and appears to possess no real selfhood. In addition, they are models for the biographer as subject, that is, for two different extremes in the perception and rendering of biographical objects. The biography that accommodates itself to the originality of the individual will do so by dispensing with the "old fix-

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tures" of "our present intellectual position." The art which maintains existing forms will reproduce only the superficial historical individual, will reproduce, in fact, only those "old fixtures" themselves.

Carlyle therefore makes the extraordinary claim that Boswell was an unself-conscious artist, an assertion that has more to do with his own poetics than anything he found in *The Life of Samuel Johnson*. He insists that ideal biographers utterly "annihilate" themselves (to employ the language of *Sartor Resartus*) in order to identify with the biographical object, and argues, in his essay "On Biography," that the biographer must have an "open loving heart" in order to "sympathize" with the other (III, 57, 45). He then employs the familiar Romantic image of the mirror and the lamp to distinguish between the two modes of biography. The unconscious biographer is a "living mirror" who reflects the other directly while self-conscious biographers are "magic lanterns" who project images of themselves onto others, obscuring their reality (III, 58).

As Carlyle attempts to put his theory into practice, however, certain ambiguities make themselves felt. Even the "living mirror" is ambiguous. It suggests a mirror that, having a life of its own, does more than simply reflect. He also must make strained attempts to accommodate invention to authenticity, arguing that invention "has, in very deed, nothing to do with Fiction; but is an invention of new Truth, what we call a Revelation" (III, 53–54). This forces him, even in his theoretical speculations, to attempt to resolve the dilemma of the biographer.

He proposes that, unable to really represent the self, he can still hope to approximate it. Not only biography, but all forms of representation are limited, for him, to an "approximation" of the object.[5] Even here, however, the division of biographical objects into original and popular, hero and quack, determines the nature and success of biography. Thus, each failed biography of a great original will be a greater success than the last; "repeated attempts" to write a biography of Burns, he writes, "will give us repeated approximations" (I, 259). One might expect that revisions would only result in the layering of each biographer's vision onto the original self, thus further obscuring it, but Carlyle confidently asserts that the historical and ephemeral dross will disappear in this process, revealing the original individual beneath. "As book after book comes forth with new evidence, the matter is again taken up, the old judgment on it revised and anew revised; whereby, in fine, we can hope the right, or *approximately* right, sentence will be found; and so the question be left settled" (III, 412, emphasis added; see also III, 90, 405). The popular individual consti-

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tuted by historical circumstance, on the other hand, must vanish with the historical era. The existence of Diderot and Cagliostro seems limited to the welter of documents they left behind, and, as these documents disappear, so do the quack and philosophe (III, 178–79, 248).

Carlyle jokingly suggests, in *Sartor Resartus,* that the true self may not be the naked body, but the scarecrow.[6] He thus expresses his anxiety that self is ultimately constituted by culture, that there is no transcendental self and no immortality. The distinction between original and popular individual tends, therefore, to break down, especially when he recognizes elsewhere that the memory of the most original poets, Shakespeare and Homer, will fade with time. Approximation, by its nature, can never be completed because the self can never fully be identified; selves are always ultimately understood through their historical manifestations. The successive revisions that produce Carlyle's Croker's Boswell's Johnson may result in a better "Johnson," but it is still not Johnson himself.

Consequently, Carlyle's works frequently dramatize the struggle of a narrator attempting to extract the essential self of a protagonist from mere shreds of biographical evidence and only able to project a fictive image of it. In "Diderot," he admits that his problem might not be merely the consequence of writing about a popular man, it being " . . . several years since the present Reviewer gave up the idea of what could be called *understanding* any man whatever, even himself." The latter undoubtedly refers to Carlyle's struggles to write the recently completed *Sartor Resartus* that dramatizes an Editor's frustrated attempts to assemble the biography of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh from disconnected fragments gathered in six paper bags. Just as the Editor ends up creating a fictive philosopher (the purely textual existence of Teufelsdröckh is emphasized by the title: a tailor *re-tailored*), Carlyle decides that, since he cannot really know Diderot, he must theatrically

> personate him; take upon ourselves his character and his environment of circumstances, and act his life over again, in that small Private-Theatre of ours (under our own Hat), with moderate illusiveness and histrionic effect,—*that* were what, in conformity with common speech, we should name *understanding him,* and could be abundantly content with. (III, 181)

Although he commences with the implication that he will genuinely identify with Diderot through his method of "personation," he hedges the description of this activity with images of illusion, demonstrating his suspicion that he is only taking on Diderot's environment or cloth-

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ing, not his inner self. Thus the whole process takes place within a mental theatre that is, for Carlyle, the emblem of fictive illusion.

II

From his father's death in January of 1832, when he wrote the reminiscence of him, to March, 1832 when he completed the biographical essay on Cagliostro, Carlyle steadily explored the problem of realism and fictionality in biographical art. Having completed the reminiscence, he felt unable even to begin writing about Samuel Johnson without first addressing the problem in an introduction that became "On Biography." In these and the intervening essays (especially "Boswell's Life of Johnson," "Goethe's Works," and "Diderot"), he never gives up his desire to depict the transcendental self, but finds that this can be achieved only through emphasizing the fictiveness of the historical one. Consequently, each essay is more overtly fictional than the previous one, and the biographical objects move steadily from the "original" to the "popular" end of the continuum. This does not mean that Carlyle consciously chose his subject matter for this purpose—it was, in fact, partly determined by the demands of his editors —but it reflects a shift in his conception of his material. Despite his avowed loathing of Cagliostro, his choice of this subject (not requested by any editor) suggests that it answered to some necessity in the development of his art.[7]

In the reminiscence of his father, he attempts to put his biographical ideal into practice, and portrays his father as an "original" who has not "left his fellow."[8] James Carlyle is not only unique, he totally transcends circumstances; he is their creator, not their creation. His unwavering religious faith puts him outside and above an era of atheism, and his masonic and agricultural creativity leads to comparisons with Johnson and Goethe (2, 4, 5, 9–10, 13). Carlyle claims a corresponding transcendental status for his activity as biographer. The use of his own memories and the authority of his personal experience give the reminiscence a sense of immediacy that is absent from biographies based on documentary evidence. It implies that he identifies completely with his father, giving us the naked, not the clothed, James Carlyle.

James Carlyle is, indeed, the type of the man with nothing to hide. To realize this picture, he attributes characteristics to his father which suggest that empathy with him is almost automatic: he is unself-conscious, candid, open-minded, reverent, prudent, unaffected and unenvious. Yet Carlyle's assertions that he should be like him indicate the distance that separates them (see 3, 7, 12, 33). Acutely aware of his

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own loss of faith in Christianity, he feels that his father belongs to a last generation of religious men (4, 26). In fact, the actual framework of the reminiscence is not the life of his father, but Carlyle's own temporal existence in the days following his father's death; he relates his narrative, he says, "without order, or almost any forethought; anxious only to save what I have left, and mark it as it lies in me" (3). To be sure, Carlyle never revised it for publication (he probably would have removed these elements if he had done so), but it is still, first and foremost, a remembrance that points us to the rememberer as often as to the one remembered. The fact that he never did revise it indicates the impossibility of separating the moment of remembrance from the man.

This narrative intrusion, coming midway in the reminiscence, nearly destroys the illusion of the idealized father:

> Though genuine and coherent, 'living and life-giving,' he was nevertheless but half-developed. We had all to complain that we *durst not* freely love him. His heart seemed as if walled in; he had not the free means to unbosom himself. . . . it seemed as if an atmosphere of Fear repelled us from him. To me it was especially so. (10)

In this moment, one suddenly recognizes that the empathy and intimacy with his father, on which the narrative purports to be built, is partly an idealized fiction, and the distance that separates the "son of time" from the father outside it emerges. While he eschews the technique of "personation" outlined in "Diderot," that is to say direct fictionalizing, the reminiscence of his father is, ultimately, a fiction. Carlyle fails to realize the ideal biography precisely because he cannot empathize with his father and because he refuses to admit that the image he is creating is a fiction.

In the works that follow, he increasingly emphasizes the historical self, the self constituted by culture rather than its creator. The commonplace division into "life and work" that Carlyle typically employs in his essays disguises the fact that he really moves from a consideration of historical context to the effects of the individual on the world. Feeling that Goethe, like his father, was an exception to the modern syndrome of popularity, he emphasizes his literary output rather than his historical situation. Furthermore, the title, "Goethe's Works," indicates not only the artist's literary output, but his ability to turn a "Chaos into a Creation" (II, 373). Nonetheless, Carlyle discovers that individuals are modified by "coexisting circumstance . . . from without" much more often than they modify circumstances "from within" (I, 261; see III, 229, 274, 418 and IV, 26). Although original individu-

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als, like his father, make their own circumstances because they are essentially creative, men like Diderot and Johnson must be understood within the limitations of the era in which they lived. If they had been born in the nineteenth century, they would have produced different, perhaps greater, results. Yet they are primarily of their own era while the "great man . . . belongs likewise to all ages, otherwise he is not great" (III, 90).[9]

Carlyle's Johnson and Diderot are less mythic or transcendental and more obviously historical than James Carlyle and Goethe. In "Johnson," he discusses the state of literature and the political and religious attitudes of the era at length, arguing that Johnson believes in sensationalism because, unlike James Carlyle, he is unable to transcend the doctrines of his era. Yet it is through this weakness that the reader and Carlyle can empathize with Johnson. For if we can understand the era, we can understand why he did what he did and believed what he believed.

Carlyle makes this even clearer with Diderot who is so much a man of the age that, rather than create order, his ideas contribute to the general decay (see III, 178, 248). When he considers them in terms of absolute values, Carlyle the reviewer is extremely unhappy with Diderot's philosophism, his atheism, and his views on marriage. With the introduction of the historical context, however, he is able to understand Diderot and appreciate his contributions because the "most gifted soul appearing in France of the Eighteenth Century . . . thinks of the things belonging to the French eighteenth century, and in the dialect he has learned there" (III, 229). As in "Johnson," Carlyle gives an extensive account of the eighteenth century "dialect," of the state of literature, the nature of philosophism, and the political ambience of the era which set the limits for the accomplishments of the individual. Yet, it is precisely because his culture is partially continuous with that of the past that he can more readily comprehend the nature of the Diderots than the Goethes and James Carlyles.

The narrator, as representative of his own era, provides this continuity, and, as the historical context carries Carlyle into the eighteenth century to see and understand these men, it also carries them into the contemporary frame of reference (see III, 247). His persistent narrative intrusions are not mere self-indulgence; they are the creation of a present as the central context in relation to which the individual may be understood. His network of opinions becomes the cultural grid on which he pegs the biography of each hero. In "Johnson," he expresses his opinions on fame, work, courage, and candour; in "Diderot," on

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puffery, mechanism, Natural Theology, and self-denial. Perhaps the most dramatic example of this technique is a passage in which he traces the continuities of book selling from the decadence of patronage in the previous century to the decadence of puffing in his own (III, 101; see also 229–30). The narrator as central consciousness provides the link between past and present.

Of course, this tends to weaken our sense of the biographical object as an independent self who exists apart from history. To the extent that Johnson is a builder in an age of dissolution, working against the political and religious changes that erode faith, he is like James Carlyle (III, 108, 121ff). But these are negative effects, not the creation of order so much as the attempt to prevent disorder. Thus Carlyle dismisses Johnson's poetical works and barely mentions the dictionary. Diderot's case is even clearer: "Whoso belongs only to his own age, and reverences only *its* gilt Popinjays or soot-smeared Mumbojumbos, must needs die with it . . ." (III, 89). In these essays, he emphasizes the historical context rather than the man and his works. The much greater emphasis on the use of secondary sources, the various texts or clothings of Diderot, reinforces this sense of historical contingency. And the more we realize that Diderot exists only in ephemeral documents, the more we realize that he is Carlyle's own creation.

If James Carlyle is the completely authentic self, the bare soul, Cagliostro, the quack, is the pure illusionist. As mere "chimera," his life is co-extensive with the fictions of his times. Carlyle virtually equates him with the eighteenth century: his propensity for brawling in taverns is matched by the frequent wars of the era which Carlyle describes as tavern brawls (III, 267, 270). Yet, because Cagliostro is identified with a knowable historical context, it is much easier to impersonate him. Kenneth Harris has noted Carlyle's tendency to impersonate his heroes:

> Carlyle always strove for identification with his subject, and the greater his sympathy, the more completely he tried to merge himself with his hero. . . . [He] was an animated lecturer, especially when excited, and the audience must have found it rather unsettling to see the speaker, abruptly transformed into a fire-breathing Luther, upbraiding his listeners as though they had been transformed into the scarlet woman.[10]

He goes on to suggest, quite rightly, that these obviously theatrical performances are actually self-projective fictions. But Harris underestimates Carlyle's awareness that his identification with others is fictive. For, if he impersonates the hero, he also withdraws and com-

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ments on the impersonation, dispelling the illusion that it is independent of him.

Besides, what are we to make of his impersonation of a *quack*? In this essay, the shifting distance between narrator and protagonist is readily apparent. Despite his condemnations of swindling, lying, and theatricality, Carlyle manifests a good deal of sympathy with Cagliostro, showing, for example, how he might have justified himself:

> Am not I a charitable man? could the Archquack say: if I have erred myself, have I not, by theosophic unctuous discourses, removed much cause of error? The lying, the quackery, what are these but the method of accommodating yourself to the temper of men; of getting their ear, their dull long ear, which Honesty had no chance to catch? (III, 302)

This impersonation itself is, of course, a form of fiction and a sort of lie, and, in the act of creating it, Carlyle manages to justify fictions in the name of honesty.

Thus, while "Cagliostro" is the most fictive of his essays, it also contains the greatest number of devices for distancing us from the fictions. It is written in two "flights" that correspond to Cagliostro's two flights from his home town of Palermo, but they also refer, as Carlyle makes clear, to the "flights" of the author's imagination (III, 260). The principle technique is simply the quite un-Jamesian assertion of his own presence. Like Cagliostro, he is a master of theatrical illusion; his entire text a performance. Urging us to "figure" or "fancy" Cagliostro's activities, explicating and moralizing, addressing the reader and Cagliostro, digging through documents, he always keeps our attention focused on himself (see III, 262, 271, 279, 281–82, 291, 292, 294, and passim). As his essay explores the meaning of theatrical illusion, he seems to be operating his own theater.

> Unparalleled Cagliostro! Looking at thy so attractively decorated private theatre, wherein thou actedst and livedst, what hand but itches to draw aside thy curtain; overhaul thy paste-boards, paintpots, paper-mantles, stage-lamps, and turning the whole inside out, find *thee* in the middle thereof! (III, 257)

The image of the hand seeking an immobile puppet reveals that the action is manipulated by the narrator, not the lifeless Cagliostro.[11]

Carlyle's extensive use of the present tense is also intrinsic to his strategy of overdetermined fictionalizing. He always seems to be watching an activity that he is only describing: "Boyhood is now past; the ferula of the Pedagogue waves harmless in the distance . . . At College we see little of him; yet thus much that things went not well."[12]

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The shift from bolder impersonation that imitates empathy to mere observation reveals that the author does not re-create, he fictionalizes. Dependent on a welter of unreliable documents, he must make up the history of Cagliostro, and this is reflected in the tentativeness of most of the narration. At one point, we find Cagliostro at the fictional "Green Goose," an inn borrowed from *Sartor Resartus* (the "Grunen Gans" where Teufelsdröckh discourses over gukguk). "Occasionally we find him as outrider journeying on horseback . . . Nay, sometimes he looks utterly poverty-struck, and has to journey one knows not how. Thus one briefest but authentic-looking glimpse of him presents itself in England, in the year 1772 . . ." (III, 281). Is Cagliostro riding on horseback or not? While Carlyle pretends to record what he sees, the uncertainty expressed by this passage discloses that he is merely imagining it. His vision is limited to a "glimpse" that appears to be "authentic," but is clearly fictive, the narrator presenting the spectacle of his own performance and slyly revealing that he is also its author.

III

James Carlyle and Cagliostro, as Carlyle presents them, are not, ultimately, opposites. When we see that James Carlyle belongs to the time of Carlyle's memory, for example, he simply becomes the opposite face of the Cagliostric coin. For Cagliostro is not simply the personification of the eighteenth century. He actively constitutes himself and, thereby, the era, thus defining a middle ground because he neither transcends the era nor is completely constituted by it.

In moving toward a definition of self as cultural fiction, Carlyle refuses to abandon the transcendental self. At the same time, he loves Cagliostro's ability to create himself. Cagliostro does not simply accept the roles, of monk, painter, and forger, thrust upon him by society; he manipulates them, casting off each when it no longer serves its function and choosing another like an actor (the metaphor is Carlyle's) choosing the proper costume for his role. For all his cant, this man is a creative artist—a dramaturge. He is, at least, able to choose his roles and yet to see them for the fictions that they are.

In this way, Carlyle saves the transcendental self. "Cagliostro" is a dazzlingly complex interplay between the fictive impersonations through which the narrator realizes the quack and the undercutting dodges through which he makes him vanish. This interplay can be felt in all of his best work right through to *Frederick the Great.*[13] It demonstrates that the only way to show the true self is to show its very fictiveness because claiming that one is portraying the authentic self confuses

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fiction with reality. But, by revealing the fictiveness of selfhood, one actually displaces the fiction in favor of the self. This is why Carlyle's style is so extravagantly idiosyncratic, continuously asserting that it is a thing in itself and thus separate from the objects it represents.

Retaining his belief in the transcendental self, Carlyle projects the already tendentious division between great and popular individuals into a division between past and present. The great belong to the lost past; the popular to modernity. That his father lived later than Cagliostro is beside the point. Carlyle sees him as a part of an irrevocably lost era of faith; he belongs with Luther, Knox, and Mohammed rather than with his contemporaries. Cagliostro, on the other hand, belongs to the era of doubt and atheism, of Diderot, Voltaire, and Hume. In other words, the transcendental self or soul, like transcendental reality and divinity, exists only in the past. The modern self is quintessentially historical. It can be found only in documents written by liars and in the "lying Confessions of one who was not so much a Liar as a Lie!" (III, 259). Cagliostro, the typical modern, leaves behind little trace of his presence, only "perhaps a few cast-clothes": "If we look still farther inwards, and try to penetrate the inmost self-consciousness, what in another man would be called the conscience, of the Archquack himself, the view gets most uncertain; little or nothing to be seen but a thick fallacious haze" (III, 300). Carlyle feels that we have fallen into modernity; selves become self-conscious must, like Adam and Eve, clothe themselves.

But, though he is nostalgic for the genuine self, he finds that, without culture, it is isolated from others. His father, as he ultimately reveals, is difficult to love because the self apart from culture is also divided from others and from the possibility of communication. Diogenes Teufelsdröckh finds that he must pay the price of loneliness for breaking off the "neck-halter" of social constraint, and, even when he has achieved transcendence, or precisely because of it, he remains alone. Unable to remain in the timeless transcendental heights of his watch tower, at the conclusion of *Sartor,* he rejoins the revolutions of time by joining with the partisans of the July Revolution in Paris. It should not be surprising that Carlyle turned not just to biography, stories of selfhood, but to history, stories of culture and of inter-subjectivity, thus suggesting that the ability to impersonate others through an understanding of culture provides the only real possibility for human communication.

Carlyle finds Cagliostro fascinating, despite the triviality of the self he created, because he admires the very process of self creation. This is

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why the Victorians shifted the emphasis of autobiography from the recording of the self to the making of self. It was almost inevitable that Carlyle should take up the topic of *Past and Present.* His use of Abbot Samson, like that of his other heroes from the past, asserts the existence of the transcendental self in the face of modern quackery. By positing the fictions of Mohammed, Luther, Cromwell, and Frederick, he attempts to pry them out of the past in order to present them as a possibility for the present and to make his contemporaries aware of their own secret lives so that they can become once more the creators of themselves.

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NOTES

1. *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays,* 5 vols., ed. H. D. Traill, (London: Chapman and Hall, 1899) III, 326. All further references to this work will be cited in the text.
2. Such is the case with the only study specifically concerned with Carlyle's theory of biography: John W. Reed, Jr. *English Biography in the Early Nineteenth Century: 1800–1838,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). He sees that Carlyle "comes dangerously close to undermining his whole theory of biography," but does not entertain the possibility that Carlyle is questioning the grounds on which that ideal might be attained (p. 76).
3. James A. Froude, *Thomas Carlyle: A History of the First Forty Years of his Life,* (London: Longmans, 1890), II, v.
4. See *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays,* I, 3; I, 260; II, 100; II, 101; III, 81; III, 416; IV, 28.
5. I have documented this in "The Speech of God-devils: Masonry and Freemasonry in the Early Works of Thomas Carlyle," *Thomas Carlyle 1981,* ed. Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt am Main and Bern: Peter Lang, 1983), pp. 71–87.
6. *Sartor Resartus,* ed. Charles F. Harrold, (Indianapolis: Odyssey, 1939), pp. 62–3.
7. The approximate dates of composition for the essays discussed are: "Reminiscence of James Carlyle," January, 1832; "On Biography" and "Boswell's Life of Johnson," February–March, 1832; "Goethe's Works," May–July, 1832; "Diderot," August–October, 1832; "Cagliostro," March, 1833. Carlyle wrote many more important essays during this remarkably prolific period, including "Characteristics" and "On History Again."
8. It was published posthumously by Froude, but I cite the more reliable edition originally prepared by C. E. Norton: *Reminiscences,* ed. Walter Murdoch, (1937; rpt. London: Dent, 1972), p. 7. All references will be cited in the text.
9. Reed argues that Carlyle views life as a battle of will versus circumstance (pp. 74–75). While I see a similar tension, I want to stress the epistemological implications of a model that contrasts the self constituted by society with one that recreates it.
10. Kenneth Marc Harris, "Transcendental Biography: Carlyle and Emerson," in

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Studies in Biography, ed. Daniel Aaron, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 101–3; see also 108.

11. I have in mind the self-dramatizing narrator of Dickens' novels. See Robert Garis, *The Dickens Theatre: A Reassessment of the Novels,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).
12. *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays,* III, 93. More examples may be found throughout "Johnson." See also "Diderot," III, 225.
13. See Morse Peckham, *"Frederick the Great,"* in *Carlyle Past and Present,* ed. Kenneth J. Fielding and Rodger Tarr, (London: Vision 1976), pp. 198–215.

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FRANCIS C. MOLLOY

The Life of Francis Stuart: Questions and Some Answers

The publication in paperback of Francis Stuart's *Black List, Section H* will undoubtedly stimulate greater interest in this writer than he has hitherto enjoyed.[1] Promotional blurbs have already picked out salient points in his life story. A comment in *The Sydney Morning Herald* referred to Stuart as "an Australian writer turned fascist"; *British Booknews* stated that *Black List* was "the story of an I.R.A. gunman who went to Germany in 1940 to support Hitler"; and the *Bookseller* announced that the book was "the story of an I.R.A. gunrunner, a partisan of Hitler's Reich and a dabbler in the Irish literary scene."[2] All aimed at getting attention certainly, but the accuracy of the biographical details is clearly open to question. The book itself, it should be pointed out, is something of an enigma: it is a mixture of two forms, autobiography and fiction. The author has acknowledged that it is an account of his life, but shaped in the form of a novel—third-person narration, use of a persona for the author, etc. While not wishing to dwell here on the literary merits of *Black List,*[3] I think it is appropriate to explore some of the questions about Stuart's life and to separate what is known from what has yet to be revealed.

Francis Stuart was born in the northern Australian town of Townsville on 29 April 1902. His father, Henry Stuart, had emigrated from Ireland in the 1870s and taken up a large area of pastoral land in Queensland. Despite difficulties—droughts, fluctuations in wool prices, harsh living conditions—his venture prospered and in 1900 he returned to Ireland to look for a wife. On 28 January 1901 he married

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Elizabeth Montgomery, who came from his own county of Antrim, and straightway they journeyed to Queensland, where their child, christened Henry Francis Montgomery, was born. In August that year Henry Stuart died in what can only be described as mysterious circumstances. The Registrar-General's Office in Queensland has no record of his death, so there is no official evidence of cause of death. The Stuart and Montgomery families maintain that he collapsed from sunstroke, was taken to hospital and, while deranged, shot himself. His son believes that alcoholism led to his hospitalisation, but he too thinks it likely that he committed suicide. Certainly, as a child, Francis sensed that the families regarded the death as a disgrace and later for Stuart the writer, his father came to represent the archetypal outcast.[4]

Given the fact that Elizabeth Stuart had only recently arrived in Queensland and had no close friends there, it was unlikely that she would remain. Moreover, she was a gentle, unassertive woman, not the kind to go into the interior and manage a large sheep station. Arrangements were made for her to receive income from the property, now controlled by a brother-in-law and another partner, and there was enough for mother and son to live on when they returned to Ireland toward the end of 1902. So ended the Australian period of Francis Stuart's life, and although he has never returned, he recently expressed regret at not revisiting North Queensland and the land his father once owned.[5]

His childhood and education were unexceptional. His early years were lonely but not unpleasant—he lived with his mother and aunt in the quiet countryside of County Meath, some thirty miles from Dublin, but there were also lengthy visits to the many relations in County Antrim. In 1909 when his mother moved to Dublin, he attended a day school at Monkstown, and three years later, following the custom of the Irish upper class, he was sent to boarding schools in England, an experience his secluded childhood had not prepared him for. For six years, including three at Rugby, he endured the regimentation, coldness and hostility of the private school system to outsiders such as himself: he was never allowed to forget he was Irish. He left Rugby in July 1918 and after a short stay in Antrim, his mother decided he should go to Dublin to prepare for the university entrance examinations.

These early years of childhood and schooling are not covered in *Black List,* but except for the death of his father, the facts are not disputed. The book opens with a brief chapter set in Antrim during that summer of 1918. Stuart presents himself—referred to usually as H, the

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Molloy

initial of his unused first name—scribbling some lines of verse, writing a pro-Home Rule letter to the *Irish Times,* calculated to shock his pro-British family, and absorbed in fantasies about women. He is vaguely aware of seeking for answers to some "mystery"(9), and that writing, political nonconformity and women are inextricably bound up with this search. While all three are woven into the narrative in the early chapters, relations with women, and with one in particular, stand out; other sources would confirm that it was his major preoccupation for several years after arriving in Dublin.[6]

One evening not long after his arrival, Stuart was taken by his tutor to one of George Russell's (AE) Sunday evenings "at homes", a weekly opportunity for literary aficionados and others to discuss the issues of the day. There he met Iseult Gonne, daughter of the then legendary Maud Gonne MacBride, nationalist leader and friend of W. B. Yeats. The young man was enthralled. Paintings of Iseult such as the one by AE in the National Gallery in Dublin show her as having Maud Gonne's striking beauty, and Yeats was also struck by the similarity between mother and daughter.[7] Stuart was captivated as much by the world that surrounded her, a world of romantic poetry, French culture and Irish nationalist fervour, as by her physical appearance. He abandoned university aspirations and pursued this girl who was seven years his senior. Both families opposed marriage, so in January 1920 the lovers eloped to London and lived together in a flat near the Tottenham Court Road for several weeks. Finally the families relented and the couple were married in April that year.

"I related the whole of my marriage while it lasted" in *Black List,* Stuart stated some years ago[8] and certainly we can admire the honesty with which he presents the troubled relationship. There were problems on both sides. Firstly, there was a lack of sexual rapport between them. The young Stuart was totally naive about sexual matters, and his fumbling attempts at intimacy were not treated sympathetically by Iseult. Not only had she more experience—she had been the mistress of Ezra Pound for a time in 1917—but she had developed a repulsion for sex. She recoiled from intimacy, and her husband was frustrated and uncertain what to do. Somewhat pathetic incidents emerge in the retelling of all of this, such as the story of his visit to Belgium to get guns, returning with contraceptives which he cannot bring himself to use. Secondly, he was soon jolted out of the romantic dream world he had been living in during his engagement and early months of marriage. He admitted that he had "enshrined her from the first in the kind of poetry which . . . had nothing vital to say to him"(21), an

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acknowledgement that entry into her world had not led to self-fulfillment.

As his account of the marriage develops, Stuart does not hesitate to describe incidents where his actions are hard to forgive: trips alone to London and Paris, squandering money, excluding Iseult from his diverse pursuits—horseracing, farming, studying the mystics. Nor does he shrink from admitting his infatuation with other women and several casual affairs. Iseult comments that H lacks self-control: "Whatever you don't react against violently, you come under the spell of. There's nothing between, no detachment, no balance, no perspective" (114). While sharing this view, the reader is also aware that the author has given his actions a context: he senses that his creative spirit will only be awakened if he feels pain through being rejected by others. He therefore pursues situations which will further alienate him not only from family but gradually from society in general. He does allow this obsession with himself to distort the presentation of his wife and her mother. Maud Gonne is blamed for cossetting her daughter and interfering in the marriage, and is mocked for bewailing in a tragic manner the lot of Irish nationalists. Her biographers[9] have presented a more balanced picture, and she needs no apologist here, but the situation with Iseult is different. In *Black List* she is portrayed as lazy, slovenly, hostile to her husband's ideas and scornful of his shortcomings. An unprepossessing character it would appear; but glimpses of a different Iseult appear in the biographies of her mother. Samuel Levenson, for example, sums her up as follows: "she was a product of a well-bred and cultivated French society; she was well read, versed in comparative religions, a good conversationalist in both French and English; . . . she was outgoing and generous; she would not speak badly about anyone, even her husband."[10]

In the early years of the marriage, Stuart was brought into contact with people engaged in the bitter war against the British. Maud Gonne's Dublin house, where the young couple lived for a time, was a meeting place for all kinds of revolutionaries, but during this period (up to the summer of 1921) Stuart was not involved in any political or terrorist activities. Indeed Iseult at times suspected that his English schooling had tainted him with anti-Irish sentiments. After the death of their first child, they travelled to Europe and spent many months in Germany and Austria. Their return to Dublin in June 1922 coincided with the beginning of the Civil War fought between those who accepted the treaty with Britain and those who wanted to fight on for an Irish republic. The MacBride family sided with the republican

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cause, and the Stuarts were drawn into the conflict. Iseult, who had been a nurse's aide in France during the First World War, joined her mother and others in nursing the wounded in a makeshift hospital. According to one source, Francis "carried slop pails with bloodstained swabs".[11] Later he was prevailed upon to do more. Iseult's half-brother, Sean MacBride, a leader of the I.R.A., must have exerted pressure, and although never officially a member of the organization,[12] Stuart did engage in terrorist activities. He went to Belgium and brought back three guns, hardly enough to qualify him as a "gunrunner" in the contemporary sense, and, as stated earlier, he was as much concerned about contraceptives as guns. Still it was a start. On his return he took part in a holdup of the Wexford train, but some days later was captured while trying to seize an armoured car. He was then interned from September 1922 until December 1923. These facts are not contested, but what of his motivation for involvement in the republican cause?

Black List does provide one answer. He scorns the belief held by most of his fellow-republicans that their victory would bring about a better Irish society. Instead, he supports those who possess more radical ideals; they want to bring about a total upheaval and shattering of existing social codes. Stuart, dimly aware that the Russian Revolution presented similar possibilities, finds that he shares these anarchistic thoughts. He confesses to feeling at home among revolutionaries "whose aim had less to do with Irish independence than in casting doubt on traditional values and judgements"(65). But as the war drags on, he comes to accept that there will be no social upheaval; irrespective of who wins, "art, religion and politics would still be run by those who at best used them to give power, prestige and a good living, at worst . . . as a means towards a sterile, high-toned conformism" (78). Whether such statements accurately reflected his beliefs at this time must be questioned. A contemporary pamphlet, "Nationality and Culture", which he wrote in 1924, contains no disillusionment with republicanism. On the contrary, he confidently predicts an Irish republic and exhorts his fellow-countrymen to rally behind an Irish culture that will be independent from England's—popular sentiments, of course, at that time. Significantly, the tone is this short work is optimistic.[13]

It is evident therefore that the biographer must adopt a cautious approach towards *Black List*. Despite Stuart's assurances on the authenticity of the opinions and the appearance of individuals in their own names—Iseult and Maud Gonne, W. B. Yeats and so on—this is

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not a conventional autobiography. It does not present a comprehensive portrait of its author and his relations with others. Instead, he set out to arrange this thirty-year period (1918–1946) into the form of an artistic quest, a type of *künstlerroman,* but a highly idiosyncratic one since, as already intimated, maturity will be achieved only when he has experienced the pain of being rejected by family and society; in short, when he becomes a pariah. Milestones along the way—marriage, affairs, civil war, his later study of the mystics, gambling, and decision to go to Germany in 1939—are analysed for their potential in furthering rejection. The reader is aware that the author has constructed a framework whereby he can justify actions which at the time of happening were inexplicable to others and often seemed indefensible. At times there is a suspicion that he is deliberately adopting the pose of an outsider for the sake of art; on one occasion, for example, he shuns a cosy family gathering, and comments:

> If he was ever to have experience, in his ordained degree, of what he thought of as the nature of reality, he had to be in the exposed place where such could reach him. Those enjoying sheltered existences received comforting intimations about the relevance of their beliefs which, for their continuing peace of mind, they had fiercely to defend. (196)

The desire to be in the "exposed place", removed from "sheltered existences", leads one to suspect that he wishes to be seen as a latter-day Romantic figure, a rugged individualist, at war with his age but hoping for apotheosis through art. The freedom of the novel form allows him to rearrange phases of his life into a sequence. In an early autobiographical work, *Things to Live For* (1934), it is evident, for example, that interest in horseracing is concurrent with studying the mystics. In *Black List* the mystical phase is placed before horseracing so that growth in self-knowledge can be more easily demonstrated.

Trying to establish what theories about art and literature Stuart held, and at what period, is fraught with difficulties. The statements in *Black List* are not corroborated by other sources, and there is a vagueness about when he actually formed his theories. Yet the emerging of the artistic consciousness in *Black List* makes fascinating reading. In 1920 while still a callow youth of eighteen, he was confessing that the artist or poet must be a "countercurrent to the flow [of society] around him"(20). The poet should not accept honor or acclaim, as Yeats was doing, because that would lead to his becoming a spokesman for society's values. Later he commented on an incident where he

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assisted two British soldiers by giving them petrol at a time of general shortage, an act which Iseult (and by implication all true Irish people) regards as traitorous: "nothing short of the sheer despair of being utterly cast off from society and its principles could create the inner conditions conducive to new insights that it was the task of the poet to reveal"(41). He recalls a number of attempts to discuss his thoughts with Yeats but is met with incomprehension; the young man's tenseness before the imperious Yeats is, however, well captured. Undaunted, he turns to other modern literary figures, but finds English and American fiction "a dreary waste of comment on prevailing social and psychological patterns"(194), and even major figures such as Joyce and Eliot are inadequate. Only Kafka and Proust have been "driven beyond the place where the old assumptions are still acceptable"(194). He too has now identified creativity with personal suffering: "no important book was ever produced by trying; it came about as the by-product of an all-obsessive and perilous inward journey"(156)—a recurring motif is that of an "inward" journey.

Whether these ideas were forming in the 1920s is open to question. There is certainly no note in his collection of poems, *We Have Kept the Faith* (1924), of a spirit out of tune with its society, and the mood of optimism in the 1924 pamphlet has already been noted. But as the years passed and the hopes for a new society faded, disillusionment and bitterness set in. Indeed, Stuart's reactions were little different from those of writers such as Sean O'Faolain and Frank O'Connor.[14] Feelings of anticipation for a new era following independence gave way to gloom when the mediocrity of life in what became known as "the grocers' republic" was recognized. By the mid 1930s Stuart was complaining of the drabness of life and the shortcomings of the Irish democratic system.[15] This complaint did surface in a number of novels written at this time in which he protested against mechanistic, rationalist societies that threatened to crush the individual. It is likely that it was during these years when the barrenness of his marriage was also increasingly evident that he felt outside the pale of family and society.

His hostile attitude to Irish politics was shared by W. B. Yeats. In July 1933 Yeats wrote, "I find myself constantly urging the despotic rule of the educated classes as the only end to our troubles",[16] and a year later was active in an Irish fascist organization, hoping that it might lead to the overthrow of democracy. Stuart made no such overt moves, and why he decided in 1939 to go to Hitler's Germany, at first on a lecture tour and later to teach at the University of Berlin, has long been a mystery. To the best of my knowledge there is no contemporary

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statement explaining the decision. He has stated that he tried to face honestly his situation in Nazi Germany in *Black List,*[17] but there is again circumstantial evidence that the book does not tell the whole story. There is no doubt that it is structured so that the first two-thirds are a preparation for the German phase: H's search for an "exposed place" will now be fulfilled. The reader anticipates his reactions when others claim that by going to Germany he is betraying his fellow-writers and will forever be known as a fascist and a traitor. He is unperturbed and welcomes the isolation that will befall him for so openly associating with a criminal regime. During his visit to Germany in the spring of 1939 he sees evidence of the persecution of the Jews and determines:

> that he would go to certain lengths in association with their persecutors, in violent reaction against the mores of home, thus ensuring that his condemnation would not, unlike theirs, arouse any sympathy. (225)

Always his thoughts turn to the hope that his psyche will be enriched by such isolation, and he awaits "a sudden jerk forward in consciousness, especially as expressed in poetry and fiction". (237) Although there is no sympathy for fascism, or indeed for Germany, in the book, there is evidence to suggest that he was not antipathetic to Germany in 1939. In a document published in German on the Irish patriot Roger Casement, he wrote:

> Perhaps one day, no longer lying far away, Irish and German soldiers will stand together before Casement's unmarked grave in the Pentonville (London) prison in order to honour the great patriot who has done so much to further the friendship between the two nations.[18]

Pro-German and anti-British feelings had been united in the minds of extreme nationalists during the First World War, and families such as the MacBrides were pro-German in the early years of the Second. One must assume that Stuart shared this pro-German sentiment. Before leaving Ireland, he undertook to carry out I.R.A. activities and was instrumental in arranging for a Captain Goertz to be parachuted into Ireland in May 1940, where he was to connect with the I.R.A. in establishing a fifth column in Northern Ireland. He also kept in touch with Frank Ryan, an I.R.A. leader who was living in Berlin during the war. Such actions surely betoken a man who had not entirely abandoned political commitment, at least in the Irish context, and indicate that a belief in the ideals of the republican movement still lingered in his mind. On such matters, *Black List* is silent.

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Molloy

During the final third of the book Stuart concentrates on describing his life in Berlin. His accounts here are corroborated by published extracts from his diaries and by a memoir written recently by his second wife, Madeleine Meissner.[19] Madeleine was a student in Stuart's English class and from late 1940 was also his secretary. In September 1941 they became lovers, and for the remainder of the war years were rarely separated. There is considerable interest in the wartime material, since few English-speaking writers spent these years in Germany. Personal matters, especially the relationship with Halka, a character based on Madeleine, are in the foreground of the narrative. There are brief accounts of travel to Munich and Vienna, but for the most part life is strangely routine: taking classes, translating news broadcasts into BBC English, visiting friends and occasionally eating out. At first, the war makes little impact, but by 1943 with the intense bombing of Berlin, things become more difficult. Many nights are spent in air-raid shelters, transport is frequently disrupted, food is scarce and so on.

Stuart's broadcasting needs further scrutiny. Shortly after his arrival, he agreed to a proposal to write some talks for William Joyce's (Lord Haw Haw) broadcasts to England. He wanted to use these talks as a means of counteracting the view that right was always on the British side: he referred to the Irish experience naturally, but also to the Boer War and the treatment of Gandhi. But his line wasn't strong enough for the Nazi propaganda machine, so after a short time Joyce wrote his own material. In July 1942 he was again asked to prepare talks for broadcasting, this time to Ireland. He believed that some officials were concerned that the entrance of the United States into the war might prompt the Irish government to abandon its neutrality and join the Allies. These talks, usually made every week, continued for over two years. On their content, he later wrote:

> The broadcasts usually didn't deal with politics; they dealt very often with literature, both English and Irish, and even with other literature. When they were political, they concentrated on the internal situation in Ireland. . . . I'd always, I should stress, had Irish neutrality at heart, and I never for a moment wished the Irish to enter the war on one side or the other.[20]

The discrepancy between the final statement and his 1940 publication on Casement will be noted, but in *Black List* the analysis of his decision to broadcast takes a by now predictable form:

> In agreeing, H was turning from the busy street to slink with thieves and petty criminals down dim alleys, leaving the lawful company to which

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> he'd belonged, to become, in its eyes, a traitor . . . a kind of malefactor whose rejection was seldom rescinded because the crime was not merely against an individual but that society as a whole. (258)

Increasingly during the German years he sees himself as a criminal, someone irretrievably beyond the moral pale; from the time of writing *Black List* he has pointed to parallels between his situation and that of the French writer, Jean Genet. The diaries reveal more prosaic reasons for agreeing to do the talks: he needed the money to send to his family in Ireland and he thought his position in Berlin would be untenable if he refused.

His period of residence in the German capital came to an end in September 1944. Life was becoming impossible there and when Madeleine finished her degree, they decided to go south to Munich. In March 1945 they travelled on to Tuttlingen and then to Dornbirn, just inside the Austrian border. In each town conditions were no better than in Berlin, and in *Black List* Stuart describes their hazardous existence; indeed the book could be criticized for being overly concerned with description in these chapters. There is an emphasis on the severity of the winter, the poor food, the difficulty of finding accommodation (they spent many nights in a railway station) and the effects of the constant bombing on their nerves, less on his state of mind. When the French arrived in May 1945, he decided to travel to Paris and seek the assistance of the Irish embassy in arranging for Madeleine and himself to get to Ireland. On his arrival there in August he also wrote to Iseult seeking assistance and money. Her replies reveal a longing for her husband to come home,[21] but, not unnaturally, they do not mention Madeleine. The MacBride family did send money but there was little else they could do, and it was impossible for the embassy to arrange a passage for a German girl who was classified as a refugee. Stuart was now faced with a dilemma, but rather than trying to make his own way to Ireland he managed (with great difficulty) to return to Madeleine in Dornbirn. Their reunion was brief: in late November, two weeks after his return, both were arrested and put in jail.[22]

Black List, Section H ends with the narrator's imprisonment—a moment deliberately chosen since it signifies the nadir of the author's life, at least in society's terms. Now a displaced person, potential war criminal and social leper, he has acquired that mantle of "pariah" and is anxiously awaiting the voice of creativity. He speaks of entering a "silence" which might be broken by "the howl of final despair or . . . by certain words he didn't yet know how to listen for"(351). Out of

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this abyss did come major novels of the late 1940s: *The Pillar of Cloud, Redemption* and *The Flowering Cross,* novels that warrant more attention than can be given here. They present a vivid picture of postwar physical and moral devastation but conclude with a message of hope: salvation can be won through personal sacrifice. Stuart's presence in wartime Germany was responsible for a muted response to these novels, although French critics applauded the presentation of postwar Europe and the message of hope.[23]

As for Stuart himself, on his release from prison he and Madeleine were refugees for three years, and their continuing deprivations are recalled by Madeleine in her memoir. Eventually, they moved to Paris, then London and finally settled in Ireland in 1958, four years after Iseult died. At the time of his return, he was virtually an unknown figure; the prominence he had enjoyed in the 1920s and 1930s, the approbation of Yeats and acclaim for early poems and novels was forgotten.[24] Even his postwar novels were out of print and later novels, which were inferior in quality, sold badly. He lived quietly in County Meath and spent a great deal of time writing and revising *Black List.* There were difficulties with its publication. English publishers were reticent about a work from a writer who could be accused of being a Nazi sympathizer, and it was eventually published in the U.S.A. by Southern Illinois University Press. Four years later Martin Brian and O'Keeffe brought out a U.K. edition.

Now in his eighty-fifth year, Francis Stuart is a more public figure than he has been since the 1920s. He has contributed several pieces to Irish newspapers in which he continues to argue for the necessary isolation of the artist. He also broadcasts and gives public readings from his works. Yet for all this exposure, he remains an enigmatic figure, and while it can be argued that a partial illumination of his life has appeared in *Black List,* many matters remain unclear. What were the factors that contributed to the breakdown of his first marriage? Did he support the I.R.A. in the 1920s in order to find a "true" revolution, or did that search come later? When did his theory on the isolation of the artist form? Soon after his arrival in Dublin or in the 1930s? What are the reasons behind the decision to go to Germany in 1939? Interest in the man increased following the initial publication of his major autobiographical work: postwar novels were reissued and favourably reviewed, critical articles appeared on both sides of the Atlantic, and a television programme on his life and work was made recently in Britain. What attention has been given to the life has tended to be uncritical, relying largely on Stuart's own accounts.[25] It now seems timely to

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address those remaining issues in a definitive biography, one which will truly attempt to separate fact from fiction.

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NOTES

1. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982. Page references cited in the text are from this edition.
2. *The Sydney Morning Herald,* 5 March 1983; *British Booknews,* September 1982; *The Bookseller,* 4 September 1982.
3. A discussion on the work by the present writer, entitled "Autobiography and Fiction: Francis Stuart's *Black List, Section H*", has been published in *Critique,* XXV (Winter 1984), 115–123. See also Roger Garfitt, "Outside the Moral Pale: The Novels of Francis Stuart", *London Magazine,* N.S. 16 (Oct–Nov 1976), 59–70.
4. See interview with N. Hickey in *Francis Stuart: The Harvest of Exile,* Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University College, Dublin, 1973, p. 2, where he states that his father's death "gave me a sort of obsession . . . which I think I trace in my work in so far as the books are always dealing with the problems of the outcast."
5. Letter to the present writer, 6 July 1984: "I have sometimes wished I could have returned on a visit to that part of Australia where my father had his sheep station and to Townsville where I was born and he died."
6. See, for example, Samuel Levenson, *Maud Gonne* (London: Cassell, 1977).
7. Yeats addressed a number of poems to Iseult including "To a Young Beauty" and "To a Young Girl". He proposed to her in 1916 but was rejected, and later wrote in "Owen Aherne and His Dancers", "O let her choose a young man now and all for his wild sake".
8. J. H. Natterstad, "Interview with Francis Stuart", *The Journal of Irish Literature,* 5 (1976), 21
9. Levenson, *Maud Gonne* (see 6 above); Nancy Cardozo, *Maud Gonne: Lucky Eyes and a High Heart* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1979).
10. Levenson, p. 364.
11. Cardozo, p. 352.
12. Levenson, p. 348.
13. The pamphlet concludes with Stuart stating, "I am so anxious for these things [cultural independence] to actually come about, and in the end so confident that they will, that I want us each to have a part in bringing them about."
14. Frank O'Connor, for example, in his survey of Irish literature, *The Backward Look* (London: Macmillan, 1967), referred to the stultifying conditions of southern Irish society in the years following the passing of the Censorship Bill (1929). Literature of the 1930s was often "critical and caustic" (p.227).
15. See *Things to Live For* (1934; rpt. New York: Macmillan, 1935), p.244.
16. Letter to Olivia Shakespeare in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats,* ed. Alan Wade (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1954), p.811.
17. Letter to J. H. Natterstad, 10 May 1971, in *The Journal of Irish Literature,* p.106.

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Molloy

18. *Der Fall Casement: Das Leben Sir Roger Casement und der Verleumdungsfeldzug des Secret Service* (Hamburg: Hanseatische, 1940). Quotation taken from translation in Levenson, p.389.
19. "A Berlin Diary" in *States of Mind: Selected Short Prose 1936–1983* (Dublin: Raven Arts Press, 1984), pp. 31–45; "Selections from a Berlin Diary, 1942", *Journal of Irish Literature,* pp. 75–96; Madeleine Stuart, *Manna in the Morning: A Memoir 1940–1958* (Dublin: Raven Arts Press, 1984).
20. "Interview with Francis Stuart", p.27.
21. Although Iseult knew that her husband was living with another woman, divorce was never considered. Stuart and Madeleine married in April 1954, some weeks after Iseult's death.
22. Although both were imprisoned for many months, no charges were laid. Stuart believes that he was held at the request of the British, who probably established that he held Irish citizenship before approving his release. Had he been British, he would have been charged with collaboration.
23. For examples of reviews, see W. J. McCormack, ed., *A Festschrift for Francis Stuart on his Seventieth Birthday* (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1972), pp. 24–39.
24. Yeats once referred to Stuart as "our white hope", and he praised his novel *The Coloured Dome* (1932) calling it "beautifully written". Compton MacKenzie wrote in 1933 that Stuart had a message of infinitely greater importance than anything offered by D. H. Lawrence (Foreword to Stuart's novel *Try the Sky*).
25. See, for example, J. H. Natterstad's *Francis Stuart,* Irish Writers Series (Lewisburg, Pa: Bucknell University Press, 1974).

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James D. Startt

The Evolution of an Anarchist: An Autobiographical Statement by Varlaam Tcherkesoff, 1846–1925

In that mosaic of exiles and revolutionaries who found a congenial home in the London of a century ago, there lived a Russian émigré by the name of Varlaam Tcherkesoff.[1] Born a Georgian prince in 1846 during the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, he renounced his title and became involved in the revolutionary movement that grew in Russia in the 1860s. That activity led to his arrest, conviction and imprisonment. In 1876 he escaped from Russia and made his way to England where he lived for forty years amid slender means in the northwest area of London. A survivor of the Karakozov circle and a close friend of Peter Kropotkin, another and better known exiled Russian prince who also resided for many years in London, Tcherkesoff might be described as a conscience-stricken nobleman turned revolutionary.[2] He was also a man of broad and humane interests and a passionate Georgian.

Tcherkesoff belonged to a restless generation of Russia's intelligentsia. His life became entwined in that network of Russian expatriates in Western Europe who hoped and worked for the day when a new social and political order would replace Tsarism. He is best known for his long collaboration with Kropotkin, who, after the death of Michael Bakunin in 1876, became one of the most respected theorists of anarchism of his day. The late nineteenth century, marked by reaction in Russia, the growth of the Marxist persuasion among the revolutionary vanguard, and by increasing efforts by Western European states to reform society within the existing state framework, was a difficult time for men like Kropotkin and Tcherkesoff and for the cause of anarchism. Yet they continued the struggle for their beliefs in the world as

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they found it. Like Kropotkin, Tcherkesoff was publicist as well as a promoter, although his writings never achieved the reputation of those produced by Kropotkin's hand. His main forum was that of the radical press that was so important to the Russian revolutionary exiles. In that capacity, he contributed to some of the better known revolutionary journals and published several books.[3] He also contributed occasional articles to the established quality press. In 1895, for example, he published an article, "Georgian Treaties with Russia," in *The Nineteenth Century* and over the years a number of his articles appeared in *The Times* (London).[4] In 1900, Edward Price Bell, the London correspondent and overseas manager of the *Chicago Record*'s foreign news service, engaged his services. A year later, when the *Record*'s foreign news service was transferred to its evening edition, the *Chicago Daily News*, Tcherkesoff remained as an occasional correspondent, and continued for many years thereafter to contribute to that respected midwestern American daily.

The acquisition of Tcherkesoff's services for the *Chicago Daily News* came as a result of Bell's efforts to enlarge the paper's foreign news coverage. He was interested in interpreting the news, not merely reporting it as the large news services like the Associated Press were apt to do. "Great social movements" as well as "political, moral and intellectual" ones attracted his attention, for such things he believed, and rightly so at that time, frequently escaped the notice of "routine reporters."[5] Bell told his good friend Frederic W. Wile, the *Chicago Daily News* correspondent in Berlin, that he was seeking news about "ideas, movements and events that affect the interests of large masses of people and are about equally important in every part of the thought and progressive world."[6] Considering Bell's interest in the currents of movement, his association with Tcherkesoff represents a natural connection made in the interest of gathering interpretative news.

It was not, however, until the start of the Russo-Japanese War early in 1904 that evidence appears to suggest that their professional association was particularly close. With the coming of that conflict Russia gained the forefront of international news. When the war was but a month old, Bell told Charles Henry Dennis, the *Daily News*'s foreign news editor in Chicago to whom he reported, that he was seeing Tcherkesoff "almost daily" to "pump him out, and write his stuff." Bell also had Kropotkin's views, which reached him "regularly through mutual friends."[7] He also was pressuring Dennis to place a permanent correspondent in residence at St. Petersburg who might even be able to gain the confidence of revolutionaries. "And the revo-

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lutionaries, . . . " he said, "are going to bear an important relation to Russian news—an increasingly important relation—until the present system is radically modified or destroyed."[8] So the political circumstances of the day intensified the relationship of these two men, one a Russian anarchist; the other, a bourgeois American liberal.

From this point forward there is abundant evidence to underscore the point that a strong friendship, surpassing the boundaries of professional association, developed between the two men and their families. Tcherkesoff, for instance, wrote to Bell after returning to Russia in 1906 about their "understanding" being one of his "best remembrances" of his stay in London. He even invited Bell to spend a long holiday with him in his Georgian homeland.[9] But Tcherkesoff, unable to remain in Russia after criticizing the Russian government in the wake of the Revolution of 1905, again returned to London. There he and Bell resumed their friendly relationship. Tcherkesoff and his Dutch wife Freda were frequent weekend guests at Bell's home in Kent, and the two families sometimes would spend their holidays together. To Bell's children, the Tcherkesoffs were known as Uncle Tcherk and Aunt Tcherk and his young daughter Alice sometimes would spend weekends with them at their London apartment.[10]

It was during the time of the Russo-Japanese War, then, that their relationship grew. Although Tcherkesoff had difficulty with the English language and with seeing the interconnectedness of news items, Bell obviously respected his Russian friend. Halfway through the first year of the war, we find this impression of Tcherkesoff in Bell's dairy:

> Prince Tcherkesoff is small of stature, with brown beard, hair and eyes. He has a refined and gentle face; a manner that is the efflorescence of noble blood, and a long chastening experience and of much culture. He is a brainy man, a thoughtful man, a man who speaks and writes many languages, who is a politician, a scientist, a lover of literature and humanity.[11]

Two days after writing these lines, Bell received the following letter from Tcherkesoff. Though no reason is given for its being written, it was probably offered as background for some of Bell's own correspondence on Russian figures and movements. The letter is quoted in full.

Dear Mr. Bell;

Here is a short survey of my life.

I was born in Georgia (South Caucasus) in 1846. Our family had a very distinguished position for the last three centuries of history of the

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independent and Christian Kingdom of Georgia. The twelve branches of our family owned many thousands acres of the forest, vineyard, land and many hundreds of the serfs. From my childhood I witnessed most revolting ill-treatment of those unhappy peasants and their wifes [*sic*] and children. That is why in my early youth, together with many other noble young men, I renounced once for ever of all family privileges and never signed my name with my title of prince.

Educated in Moscow military school for the nobility, in 1864 I repudiated the carrier [career] of an officer and decided to start for United States to fight together with the republicans for the abolition of Slavery. But just at this moment the first socialist secret societies were organized in Moscow, and to them I adhered from the very beginning. Implicated in two successively [*sic*] conspirations [conspiracies] I was twice arrested and kept in the fortress St. Peter et Paul in Petersburg.[12] All together I spent four years and eleven months in the solitary confinement (from 1866 to 1867; and from the end of 1869 til the middle of December 1873).

The chief accusations brought against me were: first that I helped to some friends to escape to foreign countries, and the second that first time in Russia, in a public sitting of a tribunal, I dared to affirm that Russia is ruined, that our peasantry has no means for living, and that responsibility for this ruin lies with the imperial government. I was sentenced to deportation to Siberia, where I spent two years (1874–1875).

In Siberia I was very well received by the advanced section of the society and at the end of the second year my escape (occasion) was arranged and, over Muscow and St Petersburg, I came in 1876, to London, where I was received in the staff of a Russian periodical "The Forward!" edited by Lavroff.[13] In 1878, in Geneva, with some friends we started a monthly periodical. In both papers Russian political and economic review was intrusted to me.

At the beginning of the reign of the Czar Alexander III, when the first systematical persecutions of the nationalities was started, I saw that the government began the fatal policy of the Breaking up of Russia.[14] It was my duty, of a Georgian, to oppose to the oppression. I published in Georgian in 1882 a short history of the Balkan nationalities regeneration and creation of the modern Grece [*sic*], Serbia, Bulgaria and Roumania. The following 1883, with a foreign passport, I make my first journey to Georgia; the second, third and fourth in 1885, 1886 and 1896. Each time I visited the whole country; was everywhere received most cordially and never the Russian government could arrest me, notwithstanding that the police has my photo. This success I attribute not to myself, but exclusively to antirussian feeling among my compatriots.

With the consent of my countrymen, I first time published in January 1887 in "The Times"/Mr. Walter was so kind that he put me in regular

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connection with his Constantinople correspondent, Mr. Garrision/an article on the Rights of Georgia and her treaties with Russia.[15] The same subject, in a more elaborate form, I published later in "The XIX Century" May 1895 "Georgian Treaties with Russia"; and from the year 1892 I settled myself in London and am writing regularly weekly political letters for my countrymen.

As the result of my friends and my own initiative, now we have in Georgia a strong national movement and a well organized national-federalist party which publishs [*sic*] now its official organ "la Georgia" in French and Georgian linguages [*sic*], and their representatifs [*sic*] are in intimat [*sic*] connection with Finish, Armenian, Polish and Russian political national committees. In a few weeks all those commitees [*sic*] will publish a joint manifesto to the Democracy claiming from the Russian government the national autonomy and self government.

With all the above mentioned I was only and simply doing my duty as a Georgian and a Russian citizen. My personal inclinations were always for the economic and social studies. From my small book "Pages of Socialist History," which was translated and published in the nine european linguages [*sic*], you will see, Dear Mr. Bell, that I had a good chance to explode the fallacious Marxian teaching of the concentration of capital (see pp. 23–42), and to prove that the famous "Communist Manifesto" is an unparalleled literary plagiat from a French well known author Victor Considérant. (See pp. 55–66)[16]

To these marks, all accomplished without any material interest, I owe my intimate friendship with great geographer Elisée Reclus, with P. Kropotkin and many other distinguished scientists and political men on the continent.[17]

That is a short survey of my life. If you can find it worth of interest, I shall be very pleased, indeed.

With Kindest regards

Yours very cordially

W Tcherkesoff

20 August 1904[18]

Although this letter is a moving introduction to Tcherkesoff the man, it reveals his passionate devotion to the anarchist cause only implicitly. His *Pages of Socialist History,* however, is full of passion. That volume, for the most part, is a spirited attack on Marxist socialism in which Tcherkesoff detected "formidable errors" and a great deal of pretension. There he denounced a number of the standard dogmas of the Marxist creed such as dialectic materialism, the concentration of capital and surplus value, claiming that they were an injurious application of German metaphysics to the revolutionary movement. He charged that Marx's disciples had actually become

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reactionaries and aspired to a "universal dictatorship."[19] This volume also provides a glimpse of Tcherkesoff's commitment to his own anarchist cause. In it he explained: "It is not by a political, but by an economic struggle; not by ballot-boxes, but by strikes; not by a decision of parliament, but by a well organized and triumphant general strike that the people can inaugurate a new era." Moreover, he added, that era would be one of "economic and social equality, of solidarity, enlightened, not by metaphysics, but by a thoro [*sic*] and truly scientific instruction."[20] There too one can find proof of the despair he felt regarding the lingering oppressed condition of the Russian people, the continuing Russian despotism and oppression, and the ineffectiveness of the opposition to contend with these realities. Thus the link between his theoretical writing and his own experience and aspiration, as expressed in his autobiographical letter to Bell, becomes visible.

In 1905, a year after Tcherkesoff wrote that autobiographical statement, revolution did occur in Russia. For men like Tcherkesoff, that event brought a glimmer of hope. Consequently, he made his way back to Georgia and, while en route, managed to send ten telegrams on political conditions as he found them back to Bell in London. Not intending to return to England, he wrote to Bell, "I am quite satisfied to go now to my country where my people are claiming me." He was pleased to be again in his own land, which, in his words, was "a little wild, but one of the most beautiful corners of the world."[21] His optimism, however, soon received a cruel blow. In July 1906, after the dissolution of the short-lived first Russian Duma, imperial oppression again was exercised in Georgia. Tcherkesoff, as previously noted, once more caught the attention of Russian officials for the exposures of these oppressive tactics that he published in the British and American press. Forced again to flee his homeland, he returned to England.

This time Tcherkesoff remained in London until 1917, and there continued his friendly relationship with Bell for a number of years.[22] During the World War, he supported Kropotkin in his defense of the Allied cause.[23] Towards the end of the war, after Russia recognized the independence of Georgia by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918, Tcherkesoff made his way back to his homeland. There he worked at the newly established university for the "revival of Georgian culture" in Tiflis.[24] The independence of the Republic of Georgia, however, was of short duration. When the republic fell victim to Soviet conquest in 1921, Tcherkesoff again returned to London where he died in 1925.

The significance of the account of his life and evolution as a revolu-

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tionary that he provided for Bell in 1904 lies in the fact that it is autobiographical. It tells us little of his views. For those one should consult his *Pages of Socialist History*. While it is true that one might wish Tcherkesoff had revealed more of himself in this letter, it remains a statement worthy of note. His name can be found in the standard histories and biographies of the Russian revolutionary movement, but it is only accorded passing reference. He wrote no memoirs and has failed to attract the interest of a biographer. Consequently, his letter to Bell provides an interesting self-portrayal of an unheralded Russian anarchist, which, if lacking in fullness of detail, does offer an intelligible profile of his early life.

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NOTES

This article is based on an autobiographical letter written by Varlaam Tcherkesoff found in the Edward Price Bell Papers at the Newberry Library in Chicago. The collection contains twelve items from Tcherkesoff or his wife to Bell. Other references to Tcherkesoff in that collection can be found in the correspondence between Bell and Charles Henry Dennis, in Bell's diaries and in Bell's unpublished autobiography.

1. His name also was spelled Cherkezov and sometimes Cherkesov. It should not be confused with Alexander Cherkesov, a St. Petersburg lawyer who associated with Russian revolutionaries in the late nineteenth century. In American publications, Tcherkesoff's first name also suffered a number of varied spellings, the most common of which was Warlam.
2. Dmitrii Karakozov was a member of a terrorist group; in 1866 he made an abortive attempt on the life of Tsar Alexander II for which he was tried and executed. He would have been an interesting person to have on Freud's couch, for he was in all probability a sick man and had been so for years prior to the assassination attempt.
3. His articles, for instance, appeared in *The Forward, Freedom, Les Temps Nouveaux,* and *Bread and Freedom*. His books include *Précurseurs de l'Internationale* (1899); *Pages of Socialist History, Teachings and Acts of Social Democracy* (1902).
4. V. E. Cherkezov, "Georgian Treaties With Russia," *The Nineteenth Century,* XXXVII (Jan.–June, 1895), 832–48.
5. Edward Price Bell to William R. Mackenzie, January 14, 1902, Edward Price Bell Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois. Hereafter cited as Bell Papers.
6. Bell to Frederic W. Wile, March 10, 1902, ibid.
7. Bell to Charles Henry Dennis, February 22, 1904, ibid.
8. Bell to Dennis, April 4, 1904, ibid.
9. Varlam Tcherkesoff to Bell, July 31, 1906, ibid.
10. Edward Price Bell, *Seventy Years Deep: Comprising among Other Things the Story of Five and a Half Decades on the Journalistic Firing-Line: An Autobiography*

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(unpublished manuscript) Bell Papers, Works. Hereafter cited as Bell *Autobiography*, pp. 344–46. Many years later two of Bell's children were able to recall the friendly relations that existed between the two families and remembered a number of specific family occurrences involving the Tcherkesoffs. (Interview with Alice Bell Prindiville, April 2–5, 1969, and interview with John Bell, June 7, 1969).

11. Bell Diary, August 18, 1904, Bell Papers.
12. The two conspiracies referred to by Tcherkesoff are probably those led by Karakozov and Serge Nechayev. See for instance Adam Ulam, *In the Name of the People* (New York: The Viking Press, 1977), pp. 180, n. 18 and 193; and George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince: A Biography Study* (New York: Shocken Books), pp. 102–03. Karakozov has been referred to earlier (n. 2). Nechayev was a leader of student disturbances in 1868 and 1869 after which he fled abroad, but he soon returned to organize students into clandestine rings known as People's Avenge. He fled again as a result of participating in the murder of a student whose loyalty he questioned. In 1873, however, the Swiss extradited him as a common murderer back to Russia where he was convicted, and sentenced to twenty years hard labor, during which time he died. With Michael Bakunin he published *The Revolutionary's Catechism* and in 1871 Dostoyevsky used him as an inspiration for Verchovensky in *The Possessed.*
13. In his reference to Lavroff, Tcherkesoff is citing Peter Lavróv, a theorist of Russian Populism and one of the founders and editors of the clandestine quarterly *The Forward.* He also published *Historical Letters* under the pseudonym of P. L. Mirtov.
14. When Alexander III became emperor of Russia in 1881 after the assassination of his father, he did indeed pursue a reactionary policy in regard to the press, the universities, the religious minorities and the border provinces.
15. The Mr. Walter referred to here was John Walter, chief proprietor of *The Times* (London) and grandson of the first John Walter, the founder of *The Times.*
16. Kropotkin approved of Tcherkesoff's effort to prove that Marx's theories were taken from French utopian socialists. See Martin A. Miller, *Kropotkin* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 179 and Woodcock and Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince,* p. 261. The French writer to whom Tcherkesoff refers here is Victor Prosper Considérant (1808–1893), a promulgator of Fourier's doctrines and editor of the *Phalange.*
17. In fact, Kropotkin as well as Elisée Reclus was a geographer of renown.
18. Tcherkesoff to Bell, August 20, 1904, Bell Papers.
19. *Pages of Socialist History,* p. 22.
20. Ibid., p. 28.
21. Tcherkesoff to Bell, July 31, 1906, Bell Papers.
22. Although the Bell-Tcherkesoff friendship remained intact for some time, probably into World War I and perhaps beyond, a rupture eventually occurred. One evening, the date is not known, the two men quarreled after consuming "ample quantities of champagne." Tcherkesoff, who could be explosive at times, stormed out of Bell's house denouncing him as a friend of royalty, not of the downtrodden. In his memoirs Bell reflected that they "broke forever" that evening. His daughter, who also recalls that scene, suggests that some reconcilia-

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tion may have occurred. Her comment, however, is only a speculation; the nature of their relationship in later years remains unknown. Bell, *Autobiography,* p. 344, and interview with Alice Bell Prindiville, April 2–4, 1969.

23. Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 116, and Miller, *Kropotkin,* p. 226.

24. *The Times* (London), August 22, 1925, p. 5.

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JANET GEZARI

Chess Problems and Narrative Time in *Speak, Memory*

> But whatever I can say about this matter of problem composing, I do not seem to convey sufficiently the ecstatic core of the process and its points of connection with various other, more overt and fruitful, operations of the creative mind, from the charting of dangerous seas to the writing of one of those incredible novels where the author, in a fit of lucid madness, has set himself certain unique rules that he observes, certain nightmare obstacles that he surmounts, with the zest of a deity building a live world from the most unlikely ingredients—rocks, and carbon, and blind throbbings.[1]

Nabokov's idea that chess problems have "points of connection with various other, more overt and fruitful, operations of the creative mind" has been widely accepted, but there is still no agreement about the kinds of connections there are or what we may fruitfully make of them in reading Nabokov.[2] On the one hand, chess activity and chess language figure so importantly in his narratives that readers, including Nabokov himself, have been willing to discover analogies that are at best imprecise and at worst misleading. On the other, the impulse to make analogies precise all too easily substitutes for the text some deep chess structure not especially interesting after all.[3] My thesis is that chess problems are interesting in relation to Nabokov's autobiography and his novels less because there are specific positional or strategic resemblances to discover than because solving a chess problem is importantly like reading a text. Both activities restructure and improve a finite stretch of time.

The problem solver's experience in time has especially rich implications for our reading of *Speak, Memory* because Nabokov's "Autobiog-

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raphy Revisited" is a protest against the "utter degradation, ridicule, and horror of having developed an infinity of sensation and thought within a finite existence" (S, M; 15, 297). Moreover, Nabokov has distinguished two of his own chess compositions not only by placing them as the first and last examples in his only published collection of his chess problems, *Poems and Problems* (1970), but also by placing them in *Speak, Memory.* The better known of these is the two-mover he explains in some detail in Chapter 14; the other, an ingenious retractor that he simply recalls in the foreword, has not, to my knowledge, attracted any attention. These two problems are related to each other in ways that explain their importance to Nabokov's chess imagination and their place in his autobiography. By looking closely at Nabokov's narration of his father's death in Chapter 9 of *Speak, Memory,* I hope to shed some light on Nabokov's representation of time in the problems and in the autobiography. For despite his own loose reference to his father's death as the "blending" of "several lines of play in a difficult chess composition" (9, 193), his narration of it has less to do with moves on a ghostly board than with the way a narrative discovers and sustains connections between events spaced in time as a dialectical return that takes the edge off mortality.

Nabokov has remarked that most chess players are "only mildly interested in chess problems" (S, M; 14, 288), a situation that can be partly explained by the very different gratifications that games and problems provide. Roger Caillois has argued that play itself develops and satisfies two very different instincts, one associated with diversion, turbulence, free improvisation, and self-expression ("paidia") and the other with adaptation to arbitrary, imperative, and deliberately hindering conventions ("ludus").[4] Nabokov's emphasis on "certain unique rules" and "certain nightmare obstacles" would suggest that chess problems more fully gratify the second of Caillois' two instincts. Chess games involve both uncertainty and mistakes, but chess problems eliminate the solver's latitude for improvisation and anticipate his mistakes. A game may cease to be interesting when the superior force of the White men makes it clear that a White victory is inevitable, but a problem transfers the interest from victory to how the solution is achieved. W. K. Wimsatt, the only literary critic who has written at some length about the relationship between poems and chess problems, insists on this difference between problems and games:

> the objectivity of the chess problem, its economy in complexity, and the strict necessity and functionalism of every part admitted into the

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charmed closure of the whole, are features which ought to solicit the respectful attention of every literary theorist.[5]

Nabokov's idea that a chess problem is related to a chess game only as "the properties of a sphere are made use of both by a juggler in weaving a new act and by a tennis player in winning a tournament" (S, M; 14, 288) points to trying to win as the defining feature of the game. It isn't simply that competition in chess problems is "between the composer and the hypothetical solver," not between White and Black (S, M; 14, 290), but that the solver of a chess problem isn't meant to lose.[6] His mistakes are significant only when he has been both interestingly diverted from the true solution and amply rewarded by it. His relation to the problem's deceptiveness is like that of the trained naturalist to mimetic disguise in nature: the biological play engages the naturalist, who sees both a snake and a moth, but not the predator, who sees only a snake.[7]

The difference between problems and games is especially clear in problems involving virtual play—what almost happens in the problem but doesn't—or in those belonging to the realm of "fairy chess." In orthodox problems, the board, the men, and the rules are those of the game, and the given diagram position must be the possible, if improbable, outcome of a game contest. In fairy chess, the board may be altered in size, new pieces moving in unusual ways may be added, or, most interestingly, the problem may propose conditions that contradict those of the game situation. The best known kinds of problems in this last category are self-mate problems (White to move and compel Black to mate him in a given number of moves) and retractors (White to take back a move and mate in a given number of moves). Although Nabokov's references to self-mate problems in relation to *The Defense* and *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* provide evidence of his interest in them, he has published none himself. The problem he mentions in the foreword to *Speak, Memory* and publishes as the last example in *Poems and Problems* is, however, a retractor, and it is this problem I want to look at now.

This problem was first published in the Paris *émigré* daily *Poslednie novosti*, on November 17, 1932. The two diagrams below show the position of the pieces in the problem as posed (Figure 1) and the mating picture that results from the solution (Figure 2).

The White Rook at c8 was a White Pawn at d7, which captured a Black Knight at c8. The solver replaces the Black Knight at c8 and the White Pawn at d7 and plays P×R (at e8), promoting to a Knight with

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White retracts its last move and mates in one.

Figure 1

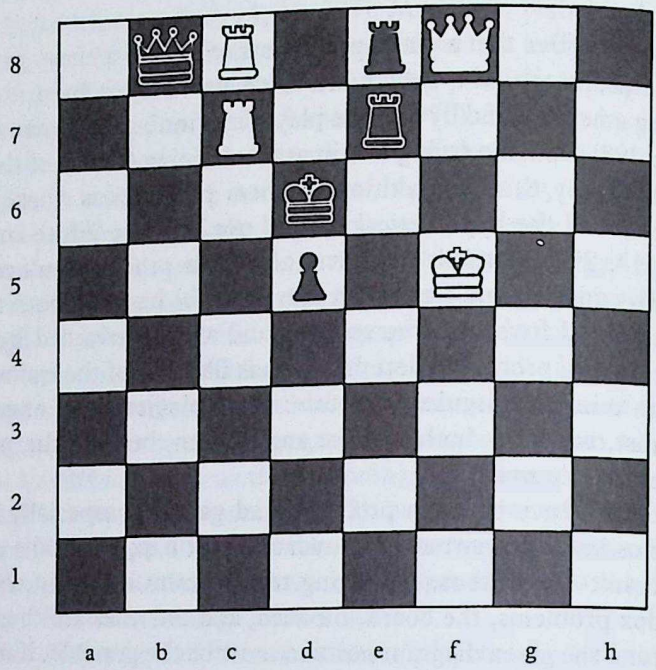
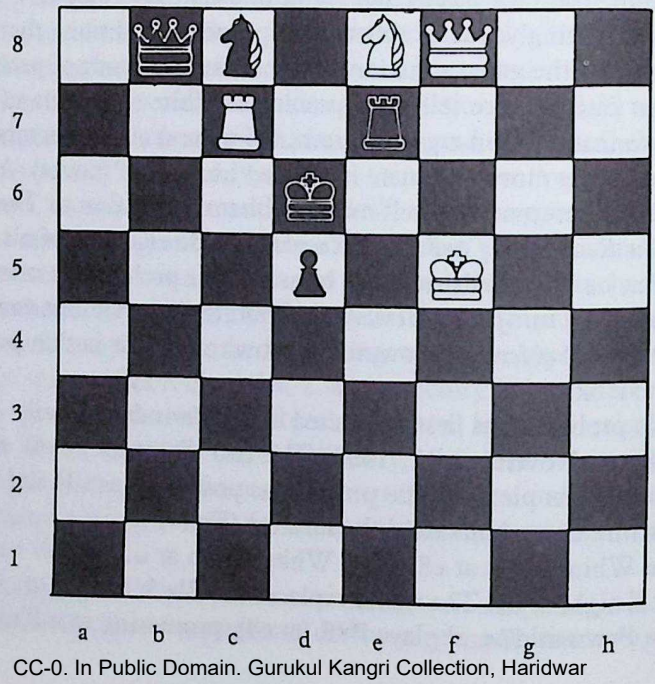


Figure 2



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mate (Figure 2). In *Poems and Problems,* Nabokov admires "the retrospective transformation" of the White Rook into a Black Knight and the Black Rook into a White Knight, a transformation that maintains the symmetrical arrangement of pieces on the board.[8] The resulting mate is a pin-model, both pure, since every square in the Black King's field is singly guarded, and economical, since every White piece actually participates in the mate. (The White Queen participates by pinning the Black Rook).

It is a commonplace in the literature of play that play time is different from ordinary time, even though the player consumes ordinary time while playing. But the temporal world of the chess problem is significantly different from that of the chess game because every problem is both a set of moves succeeding one another in time and a structure of simultaneously apprehended patterns. Moreover, certain problems, like the two that Nabokov includes in *Speak, Memory,* call attention to this aspect of chess problems. The retractor we have just seen obviously violates the ordinary rules of the game by reversing time's forward movement: an earlier situation is recomposed on the board so that a different future can be played out. At the same time, the pleasure of the problem's mating symmetries is enhanced by the retained image of the different symmetries of the original position, and the chiasmus that the solution achieves is more satisfying because of our sense of what it inverts.

Although it is a fundamental rule of problem composition that only one key move will satisfy the stipulations of the problem, the concept of virtual play in chess depends on the way that more than one key move can be made to look attractive. In a problem that has virtual play as its theme, inviting virtual keys, together with the reasons that each of them will not really work, may be more interesting than the actual solution, or the virtual lines of play in the problem may include themes that have interesting relations to the themes of the actual solution. In Nabokov's better known *Speak, Memory* problem reproduced below, for example, the theme of virtual play includes the theme of cross-checking (White makes a move that opens his King to check).

The problem clearly illustrates deception, one of Nabokov's expressed "notions of strategy" as a problemist (S, M; 14, 289), by tempting the solver with the Pawn promotion (P to b8). This promotion (to Knight, not Queen) looks appealing to a "sophisticated" solver because it creates a semblance of disadvantage for White by opening the way for a disclosed check when Black moves the Pawn at d7. In fact, the try provides for mates in response to ten of Black's eleven pos-

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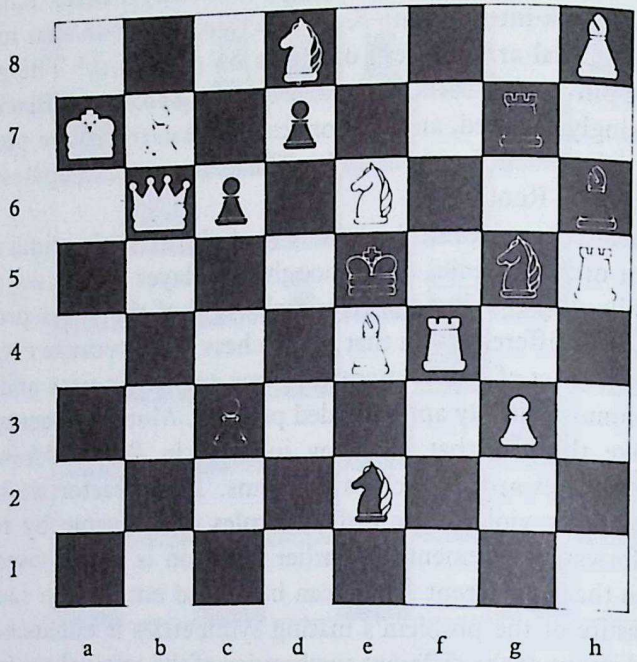
White to move and mate in two.



sible moves; only the Black Pawn at c3 can defeat it. The correct key move is B to c2, which prevents Black from moving the Pawn at c3. The Bishop gives up its guard at d5, but now guards the square it previously occupied. Thus the Rook is no longer necessary at f4, where it guarded the Bishop at e4; the Rook can check at f5, a square still guarded by the Bishop at c2, and take over the guard which the Bishop relinquished on d5.[9]

I have two points to make about this problem. One is that the enactment of the solution, the actual line of play on the board, is only interesting in relation to the try or false key. Like the original diagram position in Nabokov's retractor, the virtual lines of play remain a part of the problem, more than phantom extensions of the actual line of play. The other is that Nabokov's account of the problem in *Speak, Memory* correctly emphasizes the solution as a set of events occurring in time by presenting it as a narrative and comparing it to a narrative. "As Sartre and Benjamin compellingly argued, [a] narrative must tend towards its end, seek illumination in its own death. Yet this must be the right death, the correct end. The complication of the *detour* is related to the danger of short-circuit: the danger of reaching the end too quickly, of achieving the im-proper death."[10] Nabokov's distinc-

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tion between "unsophisticated" and "very expert" solvers in his narrative of this solution emphasizes the danger of reaching the end too quickly and relies on a notion of chess problem competence precisely analogous to literary competence to prevent such a short-circuit.

In *The Gift*, Fyodor Godunov-Cherdyntsev, a chess problemist like his creator, suggests that composing a chess problem differs from playing a chess game as a "sonnet does from the polemics of publicists" (3, 183). Nabokov's narrative of the solver's experience in *Speak, Memory* suggests that solving a chess problem differs from playing a chess game in much the same way that reading does from winning or losing an argument:

> I remember one particular problem I had been trying to compose for months. There came a night when I managed at last to express that particular theme. It was meant for the delectation of the very expert solver. The unsophisticated might miss the point of the problem entirely, and discover its fairly simple, "thetic" solution without having passed through the pleasurable torments prepared for the sophisticated one. The latter would start by falling for an illusory pattern of play based on a fashionable avant-garde theme (exposing White's King to checks), which a composer had taken the greatest pains to "plant" (with only one obscure little move by an inconspicuous pawn to upset it). Having passed through this "antithetic" inferno the by now ultrasophisticated solver would reach the simple key move (bishop to c2) as somebody on a wild goose chase might go from Albany to New York by way of Vancouver, Eurasia, and the Azores. The pleasant experience of the roundabout route (strange landscapes, gongs, tigers, exotic customs, the thrice-repeated circuit of a newly married couple around the sacred fire of an earthen brazier) would amply reward him for the misery of the deceit, and after that, his arrival at the simply key move would provide him with a synthesis of poignant artistic delight. (14, 291–2)

Nabokov's most important image for the problem as at once a pattern apprehended in a moment and an experience of developing responses is the Hegelian triad, introduced at the beginning of Chapter 14 to express the "essential spirality of all things in their relation to time." There he distinguishes "three stages" in the spiral:

> We can call "thetic" the small curve or arc that initiates the convolution centrally; "antithetic" the larger arc that faces the first in the process of continuing it; and "synthetic" the still ampler arc that continues the second while following the first along the outer side. And so on. (14, 275)

Nabokov associates this image with his life, which he describes as a thetic arc of 20 years in Russia; an antithetic arc of 21 years in

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England, Germany, and France; and a synthesis of 20 years in the United States. He applies it differently to his chess problem, since the so-called thetic arc is missing from the ideally imagined spiral of solution until it is caught up in the ampler synthetic arc. Elizabeth Bruss has argued persuasively for a reading of *Speak, Memory* itself as a Hegelian whole in three parts: a thesis of five chapters developing themes connected with Nabokov's ancestry and infancy; an antithesis of five chapters describing his young manhood; and a synthesis of five chapters coming to terms with his maturity before emigration to the United States and ending with the birth of the autobiography itself, "a dialectical return and not a mere repetition."[11] Concurrent with this pattern is the pattern perceptible in the special turns of the text in the first chapter, which describes Nabokov's "first gleam of consciousness"; the sixth chapter, which describes his lepidopteral quests; and the eleventh chapter, which describes the composition of his first poem. All these "operations of the creative mind" are closely related to each other and to a generational dialectic that is based on the importance of Nabokov's father as the main subject of the autobiography's first chapter and the presiding presence of more than its first third, his own antithetical importance centrally, and his son Dmitri's powerful significance at the autobiography's end.

The final appearance of the Hegelian triad in *Speak, Memory* occurs in its last chapter and is associated with Dmitri, whose passion for things on wheels Nabokov is recording. "No wonder a growing child desires to out-Nature Nature by filling a minimum stretch of time with a maximum of spatial enjoyment," he writes:

> every dimension presupposes a medium within which it can act, and if, in the spiral unwinding of things, space warps into something akin to time, and time, in its turn, warps into something akin to thought, then, surely, another dimension follows—a special Space maybe, not the old one, we trust, unless spirals become vicious circles again. (15, 301)

In this spiral, the thetic arc is space, a dimension Nabokov has earlier said is perceptible not only to humans but also to apes and butterflies (S, M; 1, 22), and the antithetic arc is time, into which space "warps." The still ampler synthetic arc is thought, which is the new thesis of the next spiral, which in turn invokes a "special Space" more appropriate to consciousness than our own.

To move back in *Speak, Memory* to Nabokov's narration of his father's death in Chapter 9 is to see how such a spiral can be said to unwind the vicious circle of time. The death at a public lecture in

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Berlin in 1922 is both the thetic arc that initiates Chapter 9's convolutions and the ampler synthetic arc that completes them. The chapter begins with a single sentence's unemotional reference to Nabokov's father's birth and death and ends with a slightly fuller account of the circumstances of that death. Between these two narrations of the same fact, Nabokov places a brief narrative of his father's life and a much longer narrative of events that took place in 1911. These very different kinds of narratives, the one approximating traditional biography and the other a last stab at portraying his father as he remembered him on the verge of his own manhood, have the same function. It is the second, longer narrative that makes up the larger antithetic arc of this narrative spiral, facing the thetic arc "in the process of continuing it." The most important event included in this narrative is a duel between Nabokov's father and the editor of a newspaper that had insulted him, a duel that almost happens but doesn't. Insofar as the duel introduces the theme of virtual play, and insofar as the whole chapter plays with versions of retraction—the retraction of the newspaper's insult that stops the duel, the retraction of the death imagined as its consequence, even the retraction of the death that has actually been told by means of the narrative's backward movement from 1922 to 1911—the analogy to chess problems is clear and suggestive.

Like the "fairly simple, 'thetic' solution" of Nabokov's chess problem, the death of Nabokov's father that is narrated at the end of Chapter 9 is changed by the reader's journey to it. In Nabokov's account of the way a solver should proceed in working out his chess problem, the problem's virtual or antithetic dimension is imagined as a "wild goose chase" that takes up considerable time, including parenthetically its own stories. There is no direct route to the solver's "synthesis of poignant artistic delight," only this roundabout journey past "strange landscapes, gongs, tigers, exotic customs, the thrice-repeated circuit of a newly married couple around the sacred fire of an earthen brazier." Similarly, Nabokov's proleptic mention of his father's death at the beginning of the chapter gives way to his much more detailed narration of the virtual duel, and this narration includes the stories of Nabokov's entry into the Gymnasium that year, his father's regular fencing lessons in his library, the family automobile, and much else. Returning from the Gymnasium on the day of the duel in a sleigh, the family automobile having failed to collect him as usual, Nabokov sees himself desperately "trying to skirt, lest I burst into a tempest of tears," the "emotional abyss" that opens before him at the thought of his father's death. In the final paragraph of the chapter, the sound of his parents'

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"loud, cheerful voices" and the image of his uncle the Admiral laughing and slapping "the balustrade with the gloves he had in his hand . . . tells at once that there would be no duel . . . that all was right."

> And then it happened: my heart welled in me like that wave on which the *Buyniy* rose when her captain brought her alongside the burning *Suvorov,* and I had no handkerchief, and ten years were to pass before a certain night in 1922, at a public lecture in Berlin, when my father shielded the lecturer . . . from the bullets of two Russian Fascists and, while vigorously knocking down one of the assassins, was fatally shot by the other. (193)

The narrative situation here recalls the psychoanalytical one that Freud referred to as *nachtraglichkeit,* or deferred action. An experience is remembered at a later date, when it is revised to accord with more recent experiences or a more advanced psychological development. I would put aside notions of trauma, repression, and defense, though these are no doubt relevant to the human difficulty of this narration of a father's death, in order to emphasize the way in which the reader's experience is revised in two directions. Nabokov's memory of his father's brush with death in 1911, like a still earlier memory recorded at the end of Chapter 1, when an image of his father's "being rocked and tossed up and securely caught" by well-wishers fades to an image of an unrecognized face in a coffin (31–2), is revised for the reader (as perhaps for Nabokov himself) by the fact of the death in 1922. At the same time, because the fact of the death is told twice, it is clearly revised by the account of the virtual duel eleven years earlier that immediately precedes it. By means of a roundabout narrative route that includes, even in its last sentence, a strange seascape, a burning ship, and a missing handkerchief, Nabokov succeeds in presenting his father's death movingly yet self-effacingly, neither sentimentalizing it nor drawing attention to himself, on this occasion, as a mourner.

The solution to this "difficult chess composition" is the correct solution because of the reader's detour in achieving it. But the solution is clearly not the one a reader would have anticipated. The chapter's opening reference to death by an "assassin's bullet" and a later, parenthetical reference to his father's "assassination" are consciously or unconsciously misleading or imprecise. Nabokov's father was killed in error; he is properly the victim of a murder by would-be assassins. There are at least two major thematic connections between the duel of 1911 and the death of 1922. In both episodes, an anticipated death does not occur. More complicatedly, the duel is presented as a "feudal

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custom that [Nabokov's father] had criticized in his own writings" (189), and Nabokov's schoolfellows are derisive about it. Yet for Nabokov, it is romantically associated with "all the famous duels a Russian boy knew so well," with Pushkin, Lermontov, and Lenski (191). The heroic death that is averted in 1911 occurs eleven years later, when Nabokov's father defends the friend who is the assassin's target. The friend is the same one who shares the abuse meted out to him by Rightist newspapers like the one that printed insinuations leading to the duel in 1911, and one of the would-be assassins will become Hitler's administrator of *émigré* Russian affairs during World War II. Nabokov's father's death is the delayed consequence of a lifelong antagonism, an ironic ending remembered romantically and reconceived as purposeful so as to banish the comic inflections of a death by mistake.

Nabokov's characteristic narrative strategies as an autobiographer, a novelist, and a problemist reveal his fascination with the experience of possible and actual events as successive in time and concurrent in consciousness. That he imagines the activity of problem solving as a narrative journey through "strange landscapes" and that we can describe the reader's journey through Chapter 9 of *Speak, Memory* in the terms Nabokov applies to the solution of his chess problem demonstrate that the lines of connection between problems and narratives move in two directions. In pursuing the connections between Nabokov's narration of his father's death and the particular chess problem given in Chapter 14 of *Speak, Memory,* I have been calling attention to some of the resources of narrative that Nabokov habitually exploits. In the autobiography as a whole, these include a rich array of temporal relations between the story Nabokov has to tell and the narrative that tells it, including repetitions, anachronies, and variations in the frequency and duration of narrated experience.[12] These desperate remedies for the "horror of having developed an infinity of sensation and thought within a finite existence" are the language of Nabokov's dream of "the spiral unwinding of things," when time "warps into something akin to thought."

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

NOTES

1. This article is a revised and expanded version of a talk delivered at the 1982 MLA Convention in a session jointly sponsored by the MLA and the Vladimir Nabokov Society. The quotation is from *Speak, Memory: An Autobiography*

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Revisited (New York: Putnam's, 1965), 14:290. Subsequent references are to this edition and are given in parentheses in my text.

2. In an interview with a Paris magazine in 1959, Nabokov confirmed his interviewer's observation that each of his books revealed the same preoccupation with solving a "literary chess problem" (J. F. Bergery, "Tandis que Lolita Fait le Tour du Monde l'Entomologiste Nabokov, l'Agronome Robbe-Grillet Échangent Leurs Pions sur L'Échiquier Littéraire," *Arts: Lettres, Spectacles* 746 (1959), 4. In another article, written in collaboration with W. K. Wimsatt, "Vladimir Nabokov: More Chess Problems and the Novel" (*Yale French Studies* 58 [1979], 102–15), I look at some different aspects of the relation between Nabokov's chess problems and his novels.
3. For example, David I. Sheidlower has worked out the resemblance between the moves of the characters in the last scene of *Bend Sinister* and the key move in the chess problem that figures in Chapter 14 of *Speak, Memory* and is discussed below ("Reading between the Lines and the Squares," *Modern Fiction Studies Special Issue: Vladimir Nabokov* 25 [1979], 413–26). In an unpublished article, D. Barton Johnson argues persuasively that Nabokov's own analogy between the structure of the plot of *The Defense* and a chess problem involving retrograde analysis is "so loose as to be virtually nonexistent."
4. Roger Caillois, "The Structure and Classification of Games," *Diogenes,* XII (Chicago, 1955), 65. See also Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games,* trans. Meyer Barash (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1961).
5. "How to Compose Chess Problems and Why," *Yale French Studies* 41 (1968), 78.
6. See J. L. Austin, "Other Minds," in *Philosophical Papers,* ed. J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), 82: "We don't play (competitive) games except in the faith that our opponent is trying to win: if he isn't, it isn't a game, but something different." Or, as one of the characters in Robbe-Grillet's film *Last Year at Marienbad* puts it, "If you can't lose, it's not a game." This comment is made during a demonstration of the Marienbad game, in which the outcome is predetermined. The husband M. will always win because he knows the principles of the system, unless another initiate has the advantage of the opening play.
7. See *Speak, Memory,* Ch. 6, 124–5, and *The Gift* (New York: Putnam's, 1963), 122.
8. *Poems and Problems* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), 209.
9. The solution to this problem can be found in *Poems and Problems,* 203. Michael Lipton, R.C.O. Matthews, and John M. Rice provide an excellent discussion of it in *Chess Problems: Introduction to an Art* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), 252 and 261. My own more detailed analysis of it can be found in "Roman et problème chez Nabokov," *Poétique: revue de théorie et d'analyse littéraires,* 17 (1974), 96–113.
10. Peter Brooks, "Freud's Masterplot: Questions of Narrative," *Yale French Studies,* 55/56, *Literature and Psychoanalysis; The Question of Reading: Otherwise* (1977), 292.
11. Elizabeth Bruss, *Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1976), 149–150. I am indebted to Bruss's fine discussion of the relations between *Speak, Memory* and *Lolita.*
12. I have used Gerard Genette's terms. See *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method,* trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1980).

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Reviews

PHILIPPE LEJEUNE, *Moi aussi.* Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1986. 346 pp.

"Autobiography is perhaps impossible (and even surely so) . . . that doesn't prevent it from existing. . . . To live is to choose, forget, interpret, assert the existence of a unity not because it is there, but so that it will be there." Since 1970, at the age of thirty-two, in the "frame" defined by quasi-dogmatic theories of Parisian structuralism, Philippe Lejeune set out to define what had been a theoretically maverick genre, autobiography. Twenty-five years later from the vantage point of a half-dozen books all connected with the question, he re-assesses, describes and meditates upon the changed perspectives from which he now considers the field of research he has been prospecting from a number of angles (strict textual analysis, psychology and psychoanalysis, sociology, history, patterns of culture and civilization) in his forays into what he calls the "country of the moi."

It is important to remember from the start how much stronger the signifier "moi" in French is than the word "self," or the "je" as defined by Benveniste. When Lejeune refers to that "unity" which human beings seek to construct, it is to that mythic "moi" he is pointing, the verbal signifier for that elusive entity, "identity." "Everywhere the moi is being fabricated, is reproducing itself, copying, inventing and, in turn, is copied, expresses itself, is printed, diffused. . . . " The autobiographical impulse, inexplicable, he now sees as central to the human adventure; and the forms it takes, oral and written, he sees as tentative ways of textualizing that elusive entity in order to grasp and communicate it, make it, in a sense, "visible" through language. From a linguistic artifact, autobiography has moved to the status of a universal human psychological need and desire. Essentially for Lejeune, autobiography is the record of that perpetual human quest, carried out through language, a "legitimate" activity, "imaginary like all identities, but necessary," common to all human beings. In its many forms he sees it as tied to deep changes in the cultural atmosphere. In the course of his research he has come to establish a connection between the "vast circulation" in our time of the "discourse of the moi" and its changing forms, to changes in

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the modalities of communication, the methods of production and marketing of written texts; and to the impact of such new disciplines as linguistics, psychoanalysis, sociology, pedagogy. Via autobiography current theoretical questions are raised: What is it to write? to read? What is the status of the text? of language? Lejeune's method suggests the intellectual presence of Michel Foucault and Barthes rather than that of Freud and Lacan, whom he views with some scepticism. Lejeune's field of investigation thus becomes boundless, a far cry from his initial point of departure which involved essentially questions asked from the point of view of the reader: How do we distinguish autobiography from fiction? Do we read autobiography differently from the way we read autobiographical fiction? In the light of his initial rather narrow and formal definition, he examined a few "classics" of autobiography, a canon of what he now calls "sacred texts." The definition he had then proposed ran as follows, "Retrospective narrative in prose that a real person gives of his/her own existence when the emphasis is on his/her individual life, in particular on the history of his/her personality." The dominant theme of the book is a questioning of that approach as the critic devises new methods of approach, raising new questions, not the least of which concerns the development of his passionate involvement in his own project. Lejeune now sees the autobiographical impulse as existential in essence, dependent on language secondarily for its "labyrinthian" and mythic emergence.

The young and rather dogmatic academic who in 1973 published *The Autobiographical Pact,* the first of his two most influential books (the second being *I is Another,* 1980), has travelled a long way in those years. *Moi aussi* is a kind of personal roadmap of his explorations; it could be entitled "work in progress," a fragmentary "patchwork" text. Divided into four sections, the book presents a collection of essays, all of which, except two, were previously published between 1980–1985. A brief preface provides a guide for the reader into the intricacies of the itinerary thus established. The first two sections recall the earlier work of the "poetician" or theorist re-examining Lejeune's early "project," marking its limits, formulating unanswered questions, then scrutinizing well-known contemporary autobiographies that deliberately break with traditional patterns. Of these Lejeune had previously discussed two, Sartre's *The Words,* and Leiris's four-volume *Rule of the Game,* which he tells us he had earlier studied obsessively for three years; and an intricate and amusing parody of a parody of Roland Barthes' well-known *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes,* a double critical ploy. All three illustrate different critical approaches to the autobiographical text. In the cases of Sartre and Leiris, there are re-readings that modify the earlier analysis: for Sartre, in relation to new posthumously published texts; in the case of Leiris, the re-readings involve a change in perspective of the reader-critic himself.

A definite change of orientation accompanies the two last parts; it is closely related to what gives *Moi aussi* its striking originality. The emphasis shifts from the original objective questioning of the text to a personal involvement in a quest, the critic turning into an autobiographer as he records the itinerary he has followed. Essential in its transformation is the passage from "reader" of autobiography to writer of his own. His first reading of Leiris triggered the change. Then came the discovery of a manuscript, an autobiographical text by his great-grandfather, edited and published by his father and himself in collaboration. It accompanied a lively new interest in "family" memories, collective tales and legends, developing within a family group, with all the questions they raise as to the search for identity coinciding as it were with the search for origins. Lejeune examines the question from other angles: autobiographies by non-

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professional writers, from all social spheres and levels of literacy; taped autobiographies, transcribed and sometimes modified by the transcriber; the teaching of autobiography to students at various stages in life from high school to senior citizens; specific problems such as how to begin an autobiography; how the social "discourse" shapes the image of the "moi" communicated through the teleology of the narrative and the discourse selected; he discusses the new forms of the "search for origins" in accounts of birth traumas, or the rememoration of allegedly former lives that are increasing in our contemporary world. He does not rely on abstract models; his book is rich in concrete example, comparative samplings of texts, descriptions of pedagogical methods tried, of forays in the Bibliothèque nationale in search of forgotten materials. The last section presents his ongoing project: to establish an exhaustive bibliography of all nineteenth-century French autobiographical texts, whatever the origin, length or "literary value."

Moi aussi is fascinating reading. That is no doubt because of the pervasive presence of the authorial "I." We are in the "country of autobiography" as it develops in Lejeune's texts: subjective, undogmatic; filled with facts, bibliographies and examples, some quite funny, many strange—with personal experiences, hypotheses and questionings, he deals with what he calls a "fatras" (a medley) of materials. Some he sought out, many he encountered by chance, none were a priori rejected so long as they came within the purview of "life-writings," narratives written by the person who both lived and spoke or wrote an account of the process. What Lejeune focuses on in this collection is the contemporary autobiographical production and process, "autobiography" as practiced today. For him autobiography is a living genre, always in the making, a kind of coded transcription of the patterns of imitation, rememoration and myth through which people "make sense" of their lives.

Attractive for the somewhat jaded reader that I may be, weary of the rather overexploited topic, is the unpretentious, lively fast-paced writing. Characteristic of a present trend in French criticism is the rejection of the authoritative rhetorical stance. Lejeune's refusal to settle for a single reductive "model", his search for all possible forms of autobiographical writing, his open-ended questioning of his own temporary conclusions, his constant appeal to the reader's experience and competence all emanate from the title: "Me too." "Me," like all others, in pursuit of my identity visible in the strategies and language I select to define an existential project: a Sartrean concept and multiple dialectic.

"Me too"; but the narrator is a highly sophisticated Paris intellectual, a scholar steeped in an ongoing critical debate. Many of the examples he discusses or merely points out are, of necessity, French, often Parisian, but he is aware of the broader critical parameters of his field of research, more especially perhaps in the U.S.A. The book laid aside, one may tend to feel that it has carried away with it all one's "comfortable"—to borrow Lejeune's qualifier—assumptions concerning autobiography; that one must start again from scratch, and plunge into a never-to-be exhausted mass of documents. Instead of an urge to yield to the compulsive "moi aussi," the narcissistic, compulsive desire to add one's own narrative and voice to the mass of others, whether as critic or as practitioner, one might feel—as I do—the urge to wander off into new paths. This perhaps is not the least of the virtues of the book.

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Chambers Biographical Dictionary (Revised Edition), ed. J. O. Thorne & T. C. Collocott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, reprinted 1986), 1493 pp. including index. $29.95

The *Chambers Biographical Dictionary,* first published in 1897 by the venerable Edinburgh firm, is now available for the first time in an American edition through an international accord with Cambridge University Press. There have been many revised editions since 1897, but the publishers stress that the 1984 text (the 1986 revision is reviewed here) brings both the personalities and their biographical information "right up to date." This less than specific description seems to set the tone for the entire volume.

In their preface to the 1986 edition, the editors state that it contains 1440 pages as opposed to the 1006 of the previous edition, with 15,000 biographies as against less than 11,000. To accommodate changing tastes, historical revision and "the vagaries of fashion," the number of lines allotted to each entry has been rewritten, amplified, or in some cases, entirely removed. Monteverdi, for example, now receives 59 lines in place of the previous 5, T. S. Eliot has 144 instead of 6, and the Victorian sentimental subject painters have all but disappeared. The editors admit their perplexity when faced with having to choose new names, stressing that they hope to have avoided compiling a "Debrett of the Establishment and the 'meritocracy.' " Their method, they admit with refreshing candor, has been "to ask ourselves the question 'Is he (or she) likely to be looked up?', and to answer it as honestly as possible." As examples they offer the new inclusion of Akiro Kurosawa and Duke Ellington as well as Van Meegeren the art forger, Joyce the traitor, Streicher the war criminal and Christie the murderer.

The ultimate aim has been to clothe "the bare facts with human interest and critical observation":

> We have not been as extravagant as Curll, whose biographies were said by Arbuthnot to have "added a new terror to death," nor have we sought to emulate the pious eulogies which prompted Carlyle to write "How delicate, how decent is English biography, bless its mealy mouth," but we have endeavoured to produce something more than a catalogue of facts, that is to say a book which may be read as well as looked up.

The question is how well have they succeeded? One turns immediately to those authors whose lives have inspired many years of dedicated scholarship. Samuel Beckett (as long as we're counting, he rates 27 lines; Thomas à gets 84), is said to have lived mostly in France since 1932 (it was 1938), was supposedly secretary to James Joyce (Beckett has denied it vehemently all his life), with whom he shared "the pointlessness of life which [human beings] strive to make purposeful" (what a surprise this would be to Joyce!). Major references for further reading include "D. Blair" (ouch!).

Simone de Beauvoir (18 lines) was "professor at the Sorbonne" (never). Jean-Paul Sartre receives 61 lines (34 more than Samuel Beckett), at the conclusion of which we are directed to "see works by *his disciple* [my emphasis], Simone de Beauvoir" (oh dear). Several other works are cited, most of which cannot in any manner be considered among the major contributions to Sartre scholarship.

In light of this check, I was reminded of a former colleague, a professor of political science, who when reading his daily *New York Times* never ceased to be amazed at

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how thorough and competent the reporting was for every geo-political entity but his own area of expertise. Keeping this in mind, I asked two biographers (of a philosopher and a painter) to read and comment upon the entries pertaining to their subjects. The reaction of the first was unprintable; the second described the book as "probably a harmless enough publication, one we might suggest for undergraduates or others who want vague knowledge of a person and do not need serious and in-depth information."

I asked a reference librarian at my university to evaluate Chambers, and her response was very much the same as the one just quoted. Together we looked through several guides to reference materials to see how others assessed this volume. This judgement of Walford (*A Guide to Reference Materials,* 4th ed.) seemed representative: "a good one volume for the small library." But then, just how useful is an entry which states in its entirety that "Matejko, Jan Alois (1838–93)" was a "Polish painter, born at Cracow, noted for his paintings of scenes from Polish history"? Even though it is amusing to read that Agis IV was a king of Sparta who "succeeded in 244 B.C., and, having proposed a redistribution of property, was strangled, 241 B.C." or that "Brownrigg, Elizabeth," was "a midwife hanged at Tyburn in 1767 for the barbarous murder of a workhouse apprentice, Mary Clifford,"—of what use are entries such as these to persons who want genuine information? There are far too many entries listing names followed by one-line descriptions such as "Italian painter" or "Slovene poet." It seems reasonable to assume that anyone who goes so far as to look up these persons in a biographical dictionary would probably know that much already.

There are ten subject indices, ranging from art and architecture to science and industry. These consist mostly of authors and titles and inventors and their inventions. All information relates to "relevant articles" within the book and is only given for the better-known in every category, as the editors have chosen to exclude "relatively obscure or insignificant titles and subjects." This sort of editorial selection once again severely limits the volume's usefulness for serious scholars and researchers.

The editors would like us to believe that this is "a book which may be read as well as looked up," and indeed it is amusing in parts. They insist that each entry exemplifies "human interest and critical observation," which for me translates as quirky and opinionated. The editors themselves should have the last word: they describe the subject indices as "an invaluable aid for devotees of quiz games and crosswords, for settling arguments, or for the idle pursuit of general knowledge." For this reviewer, the remark serves as an excellent description and evaluation of the entire volume.

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Stephen B. Oates, ed., *Biography as High Adventure: Life-Writers Speak on their Art.* Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1986. 146pp. Hardback $20.00; paper $8.95.

This collection of stimulating essays by various distinguished biographers presents an unbuttoned approach to biography, in contrast to a more systematic scholarly approach. A varied group of writers of lives here unabashedly advocates biography as an art rather than a science.

The fascination of attempting to reconstruct the life of another person who has lived, who has a real history as opposed to the invented history of a character in fic-

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tion, remains the center of biography's elusiveness and the source of its fascination. Wobbling between the wandering magnetic poles of history on one side and literature on the other, and in our time subject to the gravitational pull of psychology and sociology, biography is an astonishing interdisciplinary enterprise.

Is it really, deeply, a viable enterprise? Is the goal of reconstructing a past life attainable? Speaking for the negative, Sartre presents us in *Nausea* with the peevish historian Roquentin, whose mind is soured by the blind facticity of the world. Roquentin, it will be remembered, unable to puzzle out the thread of existence, spends his professional time trying to capture the life of the Marquis de Rollebon, an eighteenth-century chameleon diplomatist and presumed spy. Roquentin has found out certain things about the Marquis, but mostly he finds himself confronting his character's inscrutability and skillfulness in covering his tracks. Roquentin the historian eventually gives up this project of erecting a scaffolding of meaning—his own—around an entirely putative reconstruction—again his own—of a figure who offers only the most shadowy of shadowy histories. Roquentin, in disgust, abandons his biography with the arresting words: "The Marquis de Rollebon had just died for the second time." (One should also see Rollebon as a partial mirror for Roquentin, as Roquentin is Sartre, as Sartre had stated elsewhere: the attempted biography is a revealing autobiography. Biography is under the best of circumstances a palimpsestic art.)

But even Roquentin cannot entirely loosen his grasp on historical biography. On his way to dispatching the shade of Rollebon he delivers himself of scathing biographies of past worthies of the city whose portraits he visits in the Bouville museum, foremost among them Olivier Blévigne. Roquentin "reads" these paintings as texts, reconstructing in minute detail a history of the lives of these dignitaries from the evidence of their portraits. This "reading" is fueled by Roquentin's disgust at the bourgeoisie (and at himself), but the descriptions of the paintings themselves and of their subjects' putative lives are sharply drawn. (Others, of course, like the other visitors to the gallery, infer different qualities from these portraits.)

Biography as we think of it is a fairly recent phenomenon, although it has distinguished antecedents going back at least to Plutarch. In settled times, such as the 18th century appears to us to have been, it was a settled art—settled, that is, around the dominance of character. Biography had the sense of being the history of a dominating *character,* rather than our modern sense of representing a proportionately smaller character within the context of *history.* Personality dominated history. The concept of personality has for us shrunk in size and stature even as the concept of history has become depersonalized and fragmented. This earlier magisterial current of biography, as it may be called, the expression of a strong personality acting in the world, throve through the nineteenth century, the century of "great men," into the early part of ours; but it now no longer accords with our general world-view of Western culture.

André Maurois's essay in the collection under review reminds us of the earlier tradition: the life of the subject is accepted as being of unquestioned, central value in itself. It is to be presented chronologically, its orderly evolution is to be revealed, as a function of a simpler linear conception of time from beginning to end of the subject's life. The biographer's task is to deduce from the progression of the life its inherent principle of order, the "unity of the inner life," as Maurois calls it, which this process reveals. Today the whole concept of what constitutes a unity of self is being so radically questioned from so many directions that such an approach to biography seems scarcely any longer possible. Our view of the world is so imbued with a sense of

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fragmentation, of the unimaginable complexity of the mind, of the lack of intrinsic shape in our lives, that to posit a unity of life in a person living or dead seems beyond reach. Roquentin may be an extreme demonstration of this, but it is indicative that our dedication to the principle of the fragmented nature of our individual selves exactly mirrors our perception of the fragmentation and instability of our public social lives, at least in developed Western societies. A stance of "objectivity and detachment" on the part of the biographer—implying the ability to encompass a whole subject—sounds rather magisterial and slightly out of date to current ears.

The exfoliation of new ideas and approaches in psychology and sociology—not to speak of the radical self-questioning which the discipline of history has lately undergone—has also contributed a new sense of uncertainty, which is also of course a great opportunity for enrichment, to the biographical enterprise. (Professor Vandiver's essay is the only one in this collection that seems to take account of these developments.) Leon Edel mentions one critical view that biography is like the opera—"a mix of too many things." The burgeoning of important new biographical tools has laid a new burden on the biographer, and biographers are understandably tentative about how to incorporate these new developments into account in their methodology.

The contemporary practice of biography is of course unbalanced by the sheer mass of documentary material available to the modern researcher—Edel complains of the "oppressive weight of modern archives." And in a technological age when the scientific model is the golden calf even of humanistic disciplines, the historian-biographer must have a surreptitious guilty conscience at not providing as "scientific" a life of his subject as is attainable by the sheer accumulation of documentary evidence. This leaves the troublesome problem, raised by several writers here, of what to do about bridging "gaps" in this evidence.

Two questions recur insistently in the ten essays by various hands gathered here: is biography to be regarded as a form of literature or of the discipline of history? And should the biographer illuminate his subject empathetically from within or as objectively as possible from without? Whatever their responses to these questions, the writers in this volume all agree that the biographer must respect and shape his material, and not dump his documentation in raw form on the reader (a criterion as valid for literature as for history).

But the basic feature of biography is not data or psychological or sociological analysis but narration. This dependency of biography on narration is what makes it an art rather than a science. For, as Robert Musil pointed out, most people are narrators in relation to their own lives, and in reading the lives of others they grasp almost instinctively, it would seem, for the narrative thread. Biography has from its beginnings been the *story* of a subject's life, not the documentation of it. The "gaps" where the documentary evidence fails are precisely gaps in narration, in the narrative process. This anchoring of biography in the bedrock of narration underlies the argument of Catherine Drinker Bowen's essay for the freedom of biography from changing modes. If narration is then the continuous, unifying principle of biography, Sartre's example becomes all the more urgent: in an age which rejects the unity of narration as an organizing principle, this would make biography impossible.

In talking about the problems they face as biographers, and in implicit recognition of today's greater relative interest in the inside of people's minds, in "what makes these characters tick," rather than in their actions, the writers here assembled refer longingly to *autobiography* as the preferable mode for knowing a subject's self,

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although they are aware of the many deceptions autobiography is susceptible to. The biographer can empathize, identify, and cleave to his subject all he wants, but he can never get *inside* the character the way the self-biographer can. Psychobiography has come along to provide a category to deal with this awkward problem. (Edel quotes Nabokov's calling biography "psycho-plagiarism.") This longing might only be wistful thinking; again the example of Sartre's Roquentin reminds us that Roquentin-Sartre cannot get inside his own life any better than he can inject himself into Rollebon's. In writing about their past lives, autobiographers are just as dependent as biographers on finding external events to serve as objective correlatives for internal developments, and establishing a narrative progression to give them shape. The autobiographer's apparent advantage may reside only in the greater freedom with which he is able to invent or select his inner states, unencumbered by the biographer's responsibility to external fact. The novelist in the realistic tradition, some of the biographers here imply, is completely free to narrate, although it may be argued (without bringing up the question that modern novels have become as fragmented as everything else) that once a novelist has invented his characters he is bound to be consistent to the "facts" of their lives. The biographer's dilemma, in other words, would seem to be shared also by both the historian and the novelist.

While all the essays in this collection are lively and probing, Frank E. Vandiver's "Biography as an Agent of Humanism" stands out for its incisiveness, and also for its sensitivity to useful contemporary developments in other fields. Barbara Tuchman's "Biography as a Prism of History," another especially fine and thoughtful essay, reminds us that one of the attractions of biography is that "it encompasses the universal in the particular," although here again the contemporary skeptic might object to the confidence of this statement in the discernibility of universals or the holistic singularity of particulars.

This volume serves a useful purpose in making the reader of biographies (and perhaps writers new to the field) aware of the intractable problems inherent in biography. After finishing *Biography as High Adventure* this reviewer went off to read or re-read a number of biographies, and found that he was asking of them questions of a much more probing nature than before.

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Gary Scharnhorst, with Jack Bales, *The Lost Life of Horatio Alger, Jr.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985. 192 pp. $17.95.

Though his name is a household word, Horatio Alger, Jr., hasn't really been read for generations. Occasionally available in obscure paperback reprints, however, Alger has been a neat foil in college courses on "The American Dream." His corny characters, predictable plots, and flaccid moralism have seemed to demonstrate how vapid and insipid popular laissez-faire capitalism sounds beside such complex, "serious" literary works as Franklin's *Autobiography,* Thoreau's *Walden,* Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener," Howells's *The Rise of Silas Lapham,* Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby.*

And the "facts" of Alger's life have been irresistible: the sickly, puny youth scornfully dubbed "Holy Horatio" by other boys; the Harvard years (his landlady showing up at his door stark naked one night, the account goes, Alger promptly removed to

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quarters where "there [was] more respect for decency"); his fling with a Parisian café singer who chased him to America, where he finally eluded her on the docks; his "adoption" by the Newsboys' Lodging House in New York, which gave him story ideas but stunted his emotional growth and stifled his creativity; his beloved, adopted Chinese boy, Wing, killed under the hooves of a runaway horse; his trip West, where instead of forgetting, he went mad; the descent into bathos upon his return, when he was mistakenly arrested as a murderer; and, a final pitiful act, his unsuccessful pursuit of a married woman to France, resulting in his ultimate insanity and decline. These episodes have entertainingly illustrated that the gap between public image and private reality has tragic implications for American dreamers, that the very patron saint of free enterprise was, after all, a pretty pathetic fellow.

Now, in this delightful, definitive biography by Gary Scharnhorst with Jack Bales, we are told that the familiar "life" of Alger, perpetuated in the venerable *Dictionary of American Biography* and to varying degrees in all subsequent biographies, is a pack of lies concocted as a hoax in 1928 by Herbert R. Mayes, who later "confessed" and asked the present authors "to set the record straight."

Not that Alger was *untainted* by scandal. Indeed, in a pithy "Interlude" that begins the book, the authors come right out with the turning point of Alger's life: his dismissal from the pastorate of the Unitarian Church and Society in Brewster, Mass., in 1866 for what an investigative committee termed "the abominable and revolting crime of unnatural familiarity with *boys*" (67).

This incident is an undercurrent throughout the biography, the life of a writer, finally, of little merit. The authors admit that their book is justified in large part not because it depicts a great man or artist, but because the very name "Horatio Alger" has become larger than its owner, synonymous in our culture with entrepreneurial values. Yet owing to shrewd detective work and scholarly objectivity, and despite the low-brow endeavors and frustrated ambitions of their subject, they have written a remarkably *literary* life. Alger's contemporary critical reception is reconstructed in fascinating detail, and his literary and personal lives are continually put in perspective by allusions to our "classic" writers. (A pair of unfortunate typos has the "American Renaissance" in literature beginning in 1880, 30 years late [34], and Ralph Waldo Emerson lecturing in Marlborough three years after his death [39].) Scharnhorst and Bales have done such meticulous research that the facts of Alger's life seem to speak for themselves. Yet every page sparkles with wit and concise judgment.

The son of a minister, Alger was born in Chelsea, Mass., on January 13, 1832, and grew up in "genteel poverty." Contrary to legend, he was a popular and successful student at Harvard, where he exhibited literary talent. Holding teaching positions after graduation, he also served a literary apprenticeship in the Boston weeklies, trying his hand at satirical poems and—in such reputable periodicals as *Putnam's, Graham's Illustrated,* and *Harper's Monthly*—serious stories that "began to evince genuine promise" (36). Though his stories were always moralistic, it was the desire for a secure profession that led him to re-enter Cambridge Theological School. Upon completion of studies, he took a European vacation subsidized in part by travel letters he wrote for the *New York Sun.* He continued to write "propagandist" Civil War verse and fiction (55). And in the spring of 1866, following the scandal in Brewster, he removed to New York City, where he would "expiate his own sin through a literary ministry" (70) and where, ironically, his juvenile fiction was greeted favorably by Unitarian periodicals as well as the popular press.

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There is no evidence that Alger ever ate, slept, or wrote at the Newsboys' Lodging House; but its charitable work inspired *Ragged Dick* (1867), which, though not his first story for boys, was "one of the best yarns Alger ever spun." Unfortunately, he would seldom vary "the major contrivances of his juvenile formula—a disadvantaged hero who rises from rags to respectability, a status only partly defined in economic terms; his receipt of a new suit of clothes, a symbolic rite of passage; and his patronage by benevolent adults"—and his earlier, more popular tales lapsed immediately into formulaic repetition (83). Responding to prevailing taste, Alger turned to more "sensational and violent" stories for the *New York Weekly* (94), though making a rare sally into specific social protest with *Phil the Fiddler* (1872), an attack on the padrone system that is virtually a parody of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

Alger tutored the children of Joseph Seligman, the wealthy international financier, from 1869 to 1877 (though his intimacy with the family did not prevent anti-Semitism from seeping into his fiction); and "however banal his fiction" (100), he traveled in somewhat intellectual circles. After taking his family on a grand tour of Europe in 1873, Alger began increasingly to "borrow" from major authors. Still harboring a desire to write for adults, he coauthored with his cousin *The Life of Edwin Forrest* (1877), a work betraying the same stylistic and mechanical flaws that afflicted his juvenile fiction; indeed, the failure of Alger's artistic dream is underscored by the fact that his later biographies—of Garfield (over which Alger was sued), Lincoln, and Webster—were written *for* children. It was, the authors note, "the twilight of a low-trajectory career" (123).

Alger's sales have been wildly exaggerated. Writing increasingly in the popular vein of the dime novel Western, moreover, he became embroiled in an acrimonious debate over "sensationalism in popular juvenile fiction," Alger being condemned by the critics and banned for decades by many public libraries. Suffering "bouts of loneliness and depression" (123), Alger doted on his niece and "informally adopt[ed] three New York street boys" (124). Though his many acts of kindness and benevolence were a kind of legacy, Alger's later stories were panned by the critics, and his name became a liability for publishers. On July 18, 1899, he died in relative obscurity in Natick, Mass.

Besides setting straight the facts of Horatio Alger, Jr., the man, Scharnhorst and Bales reassess "Horatio Alger" the myth. "The folklore of rags to riches, the celebration of free enterprise," they show, was *not* his major theme (187). After 1880, in fact, his stories are preoccupied with *abuses* of wealth and power. Always essentially a moralist, Alger was "a mugwump, a liberal Republican committed to principles of fair prices and decent wages, a critic of sharp business practices and cutthroat competition" (127). A concise "Afterword" traces how the Alger myth evolved: the Progressive era found in Alger "an imaginary olden time of equal opportunity and equitable trade" (150); in the 1920s "Alger's stock hero was reinvented . . . as a business tycoon" (152); his tales served the ends of "popular political propaganda" (153) during the depression and World War II, and continue to serve as "tools of social control wielded by an entrenched ruling class." "An economic and political symbol today more by accident of birth than by deliberate design," they conclude, "Alger has become, with the features of his mutation complete, the victim of mistaken identity" (155).

The Lost Life of Horatio Alger, Jr. can be read through as straight biography. But what makes the book so much fun are the extensive commentaries introducing the

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chapter notes at the back, in which the authors lay out the sloppy scholarship, distortions, fabrications, and outright lies in earlier biographies of Alger. Scharnhorst and Bales take on their irresponsible predecessors with relish, with bluntness and even derision rarely found in academic writing. They are right on target, and their frankness is a major reason why this work of solid scholarship also makes for "popular" biography in the best sense.

In the end, Horatio Alger, Jr.'s frustrated literary career is an even more sadly inverted American dream than the now discredited melodrama of the spurious biographies has let us see. Neither the man nor his fictional heroes warrant enshrinement as bywords for entrepreneurial success. Faced with the full contours of a real life and a real career, we can no longer invoke "Horatio Alger" in the service of national myth; nor can we debunk his legacy merely with stereotypes and outlandish anecdotes. "The American Dream" Alger unwittingly helped define is finally more complex than we had thought.

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The following review treats a significant work of Indian culture, presently out of print, which the editors feel merits renewed discussion. (MJF)

Nirad Chaudhuri's, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951. pp. 506.

Nirad C. Chaudhuri was an unknown Indian until he published his *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (at the age of fifty-four), which devastatingly stirred Indian intellectual circles and illuminatingly affected Western readers. Because of its perennial value, the work, which first appeared in 1951, still holds interest and is worthy of review. Though not really an autobiography, the book's strength and validity grow from Chaudhuri's brilliant observation of Indian culture, for Chaudhuri is not among India's freedom fighters; he is neither a sage nor a seer; he is neither a "guru" nor a political figure; he is not even a revolutionary. He is just a mere average, unknown Indian!

In Coleridge's view, any life, however insignificant, if of interest and truthfully and honestly told, would be fit for an autobiography. It is with no intention of being snide that I suggest that though Chaudhuri's autobiography may not command respect with St. Augustine's *Confessions* or Mahatma Gandhi's *My Experiments with Truth,* yet it engages the reader's attention for its intellectual vigor, disturbing honesty, and tenacious truthfulness. As an unknown Indian until the publication of his work, Chaudhuri may be insignificant. Yet, unlike Montaigne who considers his own life unimpressive and ordinary, thus a fit subject for the study of common humanity, Chaudhuri believes that his "personal development has in no wise been typical of a modern Indian of the twentieth century. It is certainly exceptional, and may even be unique." Chaudhuri's life may be of no spiritual or public interest. It is, however, loaded with social, moral, ethical, and cultural interest, particularly to one who is willing to study and understand sections of the complex Indian society or to an Indian who is keen on being objective and self-critical. The value of Chaudhuri's "narrative as historical testimony" is unimpaired. His autobiography is charged with intellectual

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energy, imbued with historical consciousness, sprinkled with personal experiences in the framework of Hindu and Muslim festivals, rituals, superstitions, hatred, literary influences, British social practices and political affairs, and the rising Indian nationalism. The book accomplishes more than most fictional works, historical accounts, sociological treatises, or cultural-anthropological studies do. Perhaps the book is all in one. In what sense? The reader wades through more than five hundred pages to discover the reasons and the unique qualities of the work. Difficult it is to summarize the book; unmanageable it is to discuss adequately all the significant facets of the work in this short review. Therefore my aim is to examine a few salient features directly related to some of the social and cultural phenomena of Indian society because of their intrinsic value in understanding its complexity.

The intended audience of Chaudhuri's autobiography is essentially non-Indian—the writer avowedly declares in his preface that he has written the book "with the conscious object of reaching the English-speaking world." Because of this, Chaudhuri carefully delineates what it means to grow up in an environment of animosity, social change, political development, what forces have governed his life, what uncertainties have troubled him; he shows the reader an enlarged, though complex and disturbing, vision of the cultural and social history of a significant Commonwealth country.

In an illuminating chapter, "Man and Life in Calcutta," Chaudhuri devastatingly demonstrates his comically bitter but true-to-life shrewd observations.

> The strong herd instinct of the natives of Calcutta has virtually killed family life. There is no custom among them of a man sitting with his wife and children in the evening. It is hardly possible even to find them at home at any hour of the day suitable for calls, because their days are divided into three major outings—the morning wandering in search of casual gossip, the midday stay in office, and the systematized cultivation of company in the evenings. Even when at home, no man of Calcutta, in fact no Bengali, considers it good form to speak on any subject but domestic problems and difficulties with the members of the family, and the usual tone of this conversation too is acrimonious. In the joint families brothers take very little notice of one another, and when they do they directly and ostensibly address their remarks to common friends. Fathers show no familiarity to grown-up sons, and sons avoid the fathers even more conscientiously. Husbands and wives possibly have more to say to each other, but this intercommunication takes place in such inaccessible places and at such impossible hours that third parties have no means of judging its quality. Therefore conjugal interchanges too do not disturb the atmosphere of detachment which marks the outward aspect of family life. (pp. 385–86)

These observations apply not only for Bengalis but the entire Hindu joint family system in India. The inherent element of factiousness practised by Bengalis, according to Chaudhuri, equally applies to the rest of the Indian society. "Municipalities, universities, learned societies, political parties, public offices, business concerns, clubs, and even schools are rent by cliques, and are always splitting up like protozoa." (p. 386) The present day India's innumerable political parties, thus, may be understood in the context of the overall social structure.

Some of Chaudhuri's acute observations, however, have specific relevance to the community he comes from. With his inimitable sardonic humor Chaudhuri paints a concrete picture of the "betel-leaf chewing" habit of men and women of Calcutta.

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A small bulge was always to be seen under one of the cheeks of the men and women of Calcutta, appearing now under the right cheek and now under the left, and on account of this perpetual grinding exercise the jaws acquired a strength and prominence which was quite unexpected in visages otherwise so placid, self-satisfied, and devoid of features denoting strength of character. (p. 369)

No wonder educated Bengalis violently resented such satirical graphic descriptions: "The real shortcoming of the true native of Calcutta, as I saw it, was a pronounced lack of magnanimity and passion. His urbanity had no charity in it. After the departure of a person with whom he had talked with impeccable politeness he would make a malicious remark which revealed all the smallness of his heart." (p. 367) On the other hand, Chaudhuri, as a native of East Bengal (later East Pakistan, now Bangladesh)—he writes quite evocatively and poetically of his ancestral home—was in some ways a foreigner in West Bengal, especially in Calcutta, where he spent more than thirty years—most of his formative years and adulthood.

Though such profoundly disturbing chastisement is specifically directed at Bengalis, in a more general fashion he aims at Indian society as well: "Hindu society does not teach its youth to face life bravely." (p. 357) It is an interesting observation, but the writer does not develop or analyze the thought with specifics except to continue yet with another statement: "The phrase 'courage of life' is unintelligible to a Hindu, who accepts the first wail of birth as the leitmotiv of existence and manages quite successfully to lead a mock-turtle's life during the whole of it." (p. 357) Chaudhuri's propensity to make sweeping generalizations, however meaningful and insightful, about the Hindus and Indian society is annoying to the Indian reader.

One of the fundamental aberrations of Indian life, according to Chaudhuri, is the mother-in-law-daughter-in-law relationship. Perhaps based on both his knowledge and experience as a close observer, his sarcastic statements do reveal the inner workings of Indian society:

> Our young women, otherwise so demure and ready to efface themselves, gloat in unsubdued pride of flesh and pride of life on their power to snatch the son from the mother; and the desiccated old women, knowing and feeling in every fibre of their being what the inevitable turn of the wheel will bring, wave back defiant and derisive curses on their callow rivals. Some of the mothers speak out, others send up their secret thoughts to God, the unfailing Dispenser of Justice. And those accursed homes in which the mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law live together, only heaven knows why, they are always smouldering from the fire of lovers' kisses and mothers' sighs. (p.164)

Chaudhuri discloses painfully that his mother allowed her life to be tortured and haunted by such a conflict. In view of the pervasive traditional Hindu joint-family system, which is slowly disintegrating with easy mobility of people from rural to urban areas, changing social and religious values, such ugly conflicts sometimes assume pathetic proportions in Indian society. The conflicts may be crude and primitive or refined and sophisticated depending on the economic and social stratum of the parties involved.

Another facet of the Indian society that is surely missed by outsiders but felt by Indians concerns the magnitude of parental control—how parents exercise control on their children's education:

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It is one of the most extraordinary features of education in India that it is the parent or other guardian who most often chooses the subject of study for the student. A young man with no capacity for abstract thinking is made to read economics or philosophy, and another young man who cares only for literature is made to take up electrical engineering or medicine. The justification advanced is always some worldly advantage, fancied or real, most often fancied, and the person directly concerned almost always sighs as a lover and obeys as a son. . . . of square pegs in round holes which is so characteristic of modern Indian life. (p. 148)

Chaudhuri's exceptional personal development can be greatly credited to his father who left the choice of courses of study entirely to his children: "What my father did was to give us the means of learning anything from science to drawing and painting and then let us find out for ourselves what suited us best." (p.148)

Tracing some of the prejudices and complexes that Indians in general have cultivated and perpetuated, nearly entwined with their cultural and social makeup, as Chaudhuri rightly points out, is the problem of color. The Europeans' fair complexion held and still holds an inexplicable sway. As though echoing dark thoughts of his countrymen, Chaudhuri admits that as he grew older he "felt ever more intensely the implacable hatred of (his) countrymen for the fair complexion of Europeans." (p.119) Giving a historical background for the prejudice, he states that "it is an expression of the resentment of the autochthons against the colour prejudice or colour pride of their fair-complexioned foreign conquerors." (p.120) Furthermore, "the Hindu civilization was created by a people who were acutely conscious of their complexion in contrast to the dark skin of the autochthons, and their greatest preoccupation was how to maintain the pristine purity of the bloodstream which carried this colour. *Varna* or colour was the central principle round which Hindu society organized itself." (p.123) Chaudhuri bitterly and provocatively declares that "a Hindu is unsurpassed in his exaltation of colour and proneness to make a fetish of it. This comes out most blatantly in connexion with marriages. . . . The life of a dark marriageable girl in Bengal used to be one of unending private and public humiliation. Her mother would be perpetually reproaching her that she would never get married and remain an eternal millstone round her father's neck." (pp. 120–121) Such widely prevalent complexes can be uncovered even today by a perusal of many matrimonial advertisements in daily newspapers, weekly magazines in India, and sometimes in Indian periodicals abroad.

As Chaudhuri clearly states in the prefatory note to Book Two of his autobiography, the book is "more of an exercise in descriptive ethnology than autobiography." Many readers of the book may want to consult it for a context in which to interpret Indian lives. It seems the obvious purpose of his autobiography is to make his countrymen aware of the results of leading an uncriticized life and to bring back "moral awareness" and self-criticism.

What I have briefly explained to my Western audience in this review is a mere gathering of a few of the socio-cultural observations of Chaudhuri that are strewn across the pages of his stimulating autobiography, revealing throughout the breadth of his interests—extending to literature, history, politics, world affairs, anthropology, sociology, genetics, inter-cultural studies—his sensitivity, his awareness of the several facets of Indian life. Though published 35 years ago, the book is not effete.

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RICHARD N. COE, *When the Grass was Taller: Autobiography and the Experience of Childhood.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984. 352 pp. $27.50.

This already widely-touted study of "the experience of Childhood" is amply deserving of the kudos it has received. Demonstrating a vast and intimate knowledge of this fascinating subject, the author has once and for all laid to rest those sentimental appreciations of the experience which seemed to proliferate, largely in an Anglo-Saxon context, from roughly 1880 to the present. To do this, he has broadened his vision to include texts from world literature, not least telling of which are those from Russia and those written in English from the Indian subcontinent. The reading required for this foray—and it provides much more than an overview—is simply prodigious, holding the reader in awe. There is no bibliography, however, yet is the author's explanation of its lack by reference to one of his own ancillary publications on pages 82 and 297 sufficient to remedy the situation? (I recognize the problem—a complete bibliography would indeed have increased the size of the volume unduly—but not quite how it could be handled otherwise. Caveat lector.) Another innovation is the refusal to belabor the Augustine-Rousseau connection as central to any discussion of the autobiography of Childhood. Yet, despite some excellent pages on the latter's *Confessions* (notably on pages 30–6 and 72–6), has everything been said about the connection, as Georges May wondered in his study of the genre? Is it superfluous to dwell, for example, on the confessional mode or form as it applies to Childhood? The answer given here is that, rather than the autobiography itself, it is the mythology of Childhood which looms most important.

To deal adequately with this problematic, the author proceeds in an innovative—and convincing—way by beginning his study with the experience of Childhood and its development from a real or imagined age of innocence (chapter 1), passing in the next chapter to the intellectual transformations of truthfulness, memory, and artifice, before arriving in chapter 3 at what appears to be the core of the argument or thesis. There, in dealing with myth proper, the author interprets pro and con the magic generated by childhood. Chapters 4 and 5 deal with the attributes of authorship determining the nature of the presentation and our reaction, while chapter 6 examines the world of the child on a selective basis that more than adequately serves to provide a reified, social, or other frame of reference, without the repetitions such a procedure frequently entails. Finally in chapter 7 are broached those questions of theory which in the hands of a less astute critic would have come first, possibly dulling the reader's interest or the writer's focus. While this seemingly awkward positioning might otherwise tend to vitiate the generation of a convincing argument, the author's apposite defense is nicely expressed on page xiii. The overall result is, therefore, as previous reviewers have been quick to note approvingly, a marvellous display of the taxonomy of the experience of Childhood that naturally invites further reflection and delight, one that is unique of its kind.

There are two points which might bear further scrutiny. Whether the questions they pose are answerable is moot, but they might have helped clarify, illumine or illustrate part of the author's argument for this reviewer. The first relates to the definition of the genre on pages 8–9:

> an extended piece of writing, a conscious, deliberately executed artifact, usually in prose (and thus intimately related to the novel) but not excluding occasional experiments in verse, in which the most substantial portion of the material is

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directly autobiographical, and whose structure reflects, step by step the development of the writer's self; beginning often, but not invariably, with the first light of consciousness, and concluding, quite specifically, with the attainment of a precise degree of maturity.

While it is possible to go along with the general tenor of this premise, I cannot help wondering if it does not open the floodgates to confusion. For, as becomes apparent later on, especially when discussing Proust and his vision of the hawthorne path at "Combray" (page 124, cf. 87), the author tends to see "Marcel" as Proust himself. Much has already been written in this regard, so there is no need to repeat, for instance, the arguments of critics of Painter's 1959–65 biography or Leo Bersani's thesis on the fictions of life and art. The corrective to so exclusive a view might be observable in the transformations of reality effected by the novelist, say, in describing "Marcel's" bedroom. Thanks to Proust's artistry, the otherwise tiny chamber of everyday reality assumes the dimensions befitting a rather more grand concreteness. The same is true of other passages centered in "Combray," as any visitor to Illiers must be aware.

This same difficulty of separating the first-person narrator from "autobiography" also clouds for me possible readings of such novels as Thelma Niklaus's *Lexy* (where very obviously the hero is not the author), or certain Romantic poets like Lamartine, where literary history has taught that there are reminiscences of the poet's schooldays at Belley in "l'Isolement" or "l'Automne," but so assimilated to the ultimate work of art as to be part of a *persona;* or yet again, the unmediated "Ich" of Brahms's song "Ich ruhe still im hohen grünen Gras"—are these instances to be believed as more translations of experience without differentiation or allowance for "art"? And if so, how great an allowance?

But this problem, which admittedly goes beyond the intended framework of *When the Grass was Taller* raises another issue that I should have liked to see developed: not only "why" the Childhood experience looms so large for us today, but also "how". There is the beginning of an explanation on pages 117–123 which includes excellent analysis—and criticism—of the opening of Tolstoy's *Boyhood.* More of the same would have been greatly appreciated. Two texts come to mind as exemplary in this respect (whether or not they fit the author's definition exactly), since they possess qualities deserving of analysis and its consequent illumination: Count Keyserling's tale *Im stillen Winkel,* with its palpable recreation of fear, hallucination, and ultimately death, and Jocelyn Brooke's inimitable sense of longing and anticipation and then shattering disappointment in *The Dog at Clambercrown.* (There is also, of course, the similar case of Stendhal's Lamiel, with her refrain, "Ce n'est que cela?") Granted, not every mood or phenomenon could (or even should) be examined in this way. But the sampling in the pages just mentioned demonstrates the author's not inconsiderable capacities and serves only to whet the appetite. For it seems that, thanks only to such an analysis, can we pinpoint, understand, and appreciate the stylistic workings of Childhood autobiography as well as our mature selves.

Finally, there are one or two cavils that might be raised in regard to specific points, as for instance on page 40: why should "the center of gravity" for this phenomenon have been in France? The few words devoted to this matter do not satisfy. Then on page 129, how has the collecting-classifying mania which the author notes allowed Nodier to pass through the Terror in a state of "unalloyed bliss" become a hallmark of

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British Childhoods from at least the time of the *The Railway Children,* and hence a feature distinguishing them from the post-World War I French and others?

My own impression is that Abel Hermant (page 130) was not "little-known" in his own time, though he is in ours largely because of his alleged collaboration. On page 142, part of the explanation of Sartre's position, based on the quotation from *Les Mots,* depends on the nature (and aims) of French society since at least the time of Louis XIV and its preoccupation with "la parade," or "show."

As a result of the development discussed on pages 275–6, might not the fact of increased leisure in the contemporary world be the explanation of our curiousity about self-obsession—and sometimes even our wallowing in it, much as it also explains the great revival or interest in genealogy in recent years? Like the money expended on mass-communication, one Childhood might beget many, many more. But even in the world of today, are all Childhoods equally valid? Do not some stand out more than others? And why?

Though Sender's *Crónica* (page 277) is written in Spanish, the author did not write it in a Spanish-speaking country, rather in exile where he had lived for long years, a situation that weakens somewhat the author's argument. And though Erick Kästner (page 279) did, when young, have athletic aspirations, his suffering in World War I was sufficient to give such a biting thrust to his work as to make him akin to "the blind or crippled child" from whom he is supposed to differ.

These, however, are but cavils against an otherwise rich, informed, and especially well-written work that bears close scrutiny and will continue to repay further meditation, as its wealth of documentation and ingenuity of interpretation make abundantly clear. While the grass in the many texts surveyed by Professor Coe may have been taller, it was never greener than here.

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Correspondence

To the Editor:

It has been some time since we heard from each other, as my review of the two biographies of Margaret Mead appeared in your Summer 1985 issue. When the review-essay appeared, I was distressed to find a number of typographical errors that had been introduced into the printed text after you had received my manuscript. The very title of one of the reviewed books, *Margaret Mead: A Life,* was incorrectly listed as *"Margaret Mead Alive"* on the first page above the review, and on subsequent pages the errors included "social properties" for "social proprieties" (p. 269, l. 19); "caner" for "cancer" (p. 272, l. 36); and "Thus" for "This" (p. 273, l. 22). In your proofreading you also failed to catch some other obvious typographical errors in my original article that were reproduced verbatim in the printed version: "intention of the human brain" instead of "intervention of the human brain" (p. 273, l. 7); "science sciences" for "social sciences" (p. 276, l. 22); and "Margaret *Mead A Life*" for *"Margaret Mead: A Life"* (p. 279, footnote 1). Feeling at least partly responsible for these latter three items, I said nothing to you about the matter, but, when asked for copies of the article, made sure to insert pencilled corrections in all these places in order to avoid embarrassment.

Only recently has it come to my attention, however, that a far more serious error occurred in your printing of the essay—namely, the inadvertent dropping of six entire lines of text between the bottom of p. 275 and the top of p. 276. This is no editorial revision on your part but

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a garbling of the text which makes the end of the paragraph unintelligible.

I realize that a long time has elapsed since the publication of the piece. In view of the seriousness of the above textual error that was allowed to appear in it, though, I wonder if you could print a correction notice in one of your forthcoming issues, restoring the missing six lines of my article and perhaps, too, emending the other passages noted above.

ANITA SUSAN GROSSMAN

BIOGRAPHY apologizes to our reviewer for this situation and regrets the resulting inconvenience for our readers. We have taken steps to insure that it will not happen again. Dr. Grossman's letter provides the necessary corrections for the minor errors; the missing passage is printed below, with the original text on pages 275 and 276 in brackets.

[side-issues] were wrangled over and statistics disputed (on rape in Samoa, child abuse in Vienna) as both Freud and Mead were accused of willfully choosing to ignore the darker side of human sexuality when the evidence presented it. For Masson, Freud had denied the reality of his patients' abuse by their parents; for Freeman, Mead had depicted Samoan life as an idyll, turning a blind eye to the violent, competitive, [and sexually repressive nature of the society.]

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Amy Millstone

Gyp and the Reconstruction of (Self-)Consciousness

In a recent essay, James Olney traces the history of autobiographical theory and conclusively demonstrates that scholars in a variety of disciplines from history to literature have focused on autobiography since 1956.[1] Prior to this time, he says, "the *autos* was taken to be perfectly neutral" (p. 20) and hence, "this shift of focus from *bios* to *autos*—from the life to the self—was . . . largely responsible for opening things up and turning them in a philosophical, psychological, and literary direction" (p. 19). After this initial shift in focus, structuralist, poststructuralist and deconstructionist literary critics turned their attention to the act of writing itself: "Having dissolved the self into a text and then out of the text into thin air, several critics . . . have announced the end of autobiography" (p. 22). In conclusion, he states that "the crux of the matter" is "a fascination with the self" (p. 23).

While I do not fault Olney's analysis, I feel that the very trend in criticism that he has summarized points to the fact that theoreticians have more or less dismissed *bios* from their field of inquiry. All these theoreticians of literary autobiography seem to assume that a writer, by definition, is someone formed and informed by literary tradition, one whose consciousness is predicated on a deep awareness of and interest in writing as an act founded on literary models. It is this sort of autobiographer whom Howarth defines as "poetic," and his statement about writers of this category embraces all post-Romantics: "To them, vocation is not just a 'calling' or public duty, but the creative act that autobiography itself demands. Writing a book becomes their means of fulfillment, for it assures them that the controlling force in life is nei-

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ther God nor man alone but the imagination."[2] A good example of this—indeed, Howarth's prime example—is Rousseau, who wrote: "I don't know how I learned to read; I only remember my first readings and their effect on me: it is the time from which I date without interruption the consciousness of myself."[3] But aren't these theoreticians too narrow in their assumption of what model a writer uses for his writing? Couldn't there be a professional writer who rejects literature as a model, who defines speech, not writing, as a literary model, and for whom the spoken word is the primary metaphor for consciousness? Might not such a writer present the self—the conscious "I"—in a different way than would a writer who uses literary models? In the following pages, I would like to address the issue of critical consciousness and self-consciousness of the autobiographical "I" in one such writer, Gyp.

To the majority of her contemporaries, Gyp (1849–1932) was a central figure in the literary and political life of the French Third Republic; to her social class, she was the comtesse de Martel de Janville, née Sibille Gabrielle Aimée Marie Antoinette de Riquetti de Mirabeau. Active in the major right-wing movements of her day, Gyp was proclaimed the standard-bearer of the French Right due to her literary diatribes, and she earned an international reputation and readership through the praise of such men as Anatole France, Henry James and Friedrich Nietzsche. From the start of her career in 1879 until her death some fifty years later, she wrote over 120 best-selling novels, numerous articles and short stories that appeared in the leading newspapers and journals of the day, several dramatic adaptations of her novels and, at the end of her life, three volumes of memoirs.

It is readily apparent from the titles that Gyp's memoirs follow the same design that Roy Pascal sees in memoirs by statesmen and politicians, a design which is quite distinct from autobiography:

> The usual pattern includes true autobiographical material about childhood and youth. But when the author enters into the complex world of politics, he appears as only a small element, fitting into a pattern, accomplishing a little here and there, aware of a host of personalities and forces around him. If he puts himself into the center, he falls into rank vanity; it is as an observer that he can make a unity of his experience, not as an actor.[4]

In the case of Gyp, the first volume of memoirs—*Souvenirs d'une petite fille (Memories of a Little Girl)*—clearly betrays an autobiographical focus in the title, whereas the last two—*Du Temps des cheveux et des che-*

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eaux: Souvenirs du Second Empire (The Time of Hair and Horses: Memories of the Second Empire) and *Joyeuse enfance de la Troisième République (Joyful Childhood of the Third Republic)*—point to a central concern with political regimes rather than with herself as subject. As Pascal points out, childhood is a particularly rich theme for memorialists and autobiographers because "the child scarcely scrutinizes himself, he comes to be and know himself through his awareness of others, of the outer world. The process of growth therefore takes a lively, concrete form, through observed things and people; the widening consciousness is the widening world."[5] Because the choice of events is determined almost exclusively by memory, it matters little whether the events are true in an absolute, verifiably historical sense. In this regard, Olney states: "Though it is powerless in the past, . . . memory will create a subjective and vastly important truth about the present. Memory issues in and validates present being because it is simultaneously a tracing that leads to present consciousness and a product of that same present consciousness."[6] Though such a psychological truth is undoubtedly universal and timeless, it nonetheless reflects a modern analysis of the function of memory. However, a writer of Gyp's generation would have seen childhood as a period distinct from adulthood, and hence, as David DeLaura states, the portrayal of early personal experience in the Victorian period is treated "not only as a universal pattern of loss and gain, . . . but as an analogue of the 'losses' of modern culture. This search for one's own childhood carries its authenticity in its continually 'exploratory' character; it is a specific and centrally adaptable variant of the nineteenth-century's search for an almost pre-lapsarian 'wholeness' of personality and consciousness."[7] Within this context, the title of the third volume of memoirs not only makes use of personification, in attributing a childhood to a political regime, but moreover can be seen as fiercely ironic in that Gyp despised the Republic and looked back to the Second Empire in its maturity as a paradise from which she was forever alienated due to the rise of the infant Republic.

Although the entire first volume of Gyp's memoirs presents her memories of a unified childhood, I have limited my discussion to the first chapter of her memoirs because it is here that she describes her personal experience of language acquisition and equates this event to the awakening of her consciousness. Within the autobiographical "I," three separate personalities emerge. At first, Gyp posits a present tense "I" that views itself as a writer and expresses doubts about that self's ability to write. Soon, however, a second "I" emerges, one that defines

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itself as the "former little girl" who seeks to transcribe her childhood experiences, but who maintains emotional distance from these experiences by writing in the historic past tense. As Gyp becomes involved in the evocation of the past, she adopts a third "I," that of the little girl who *lived* the experiences. At each level, the "I" is aware of the importance of language as the foremost means for control of reality. Equating language with consciousness is consistent throughout the author's work, for the majority of her novels are in dialogue form—direct verbal communication—rather than in traditional descriptive narratives. In the memoirs, however, and particularly in the first volume, the tone is much more personal, not only because the subject is overtly autobiographical, but also because the reader is directly engaged in a dialogue with the writer.

In the opening lines of *Souvenirs d'une petite fille,* Gyp wrestles with her conscience and admits that she, the transcriber, is hesitant to write her memoirs because she fears that her childhood can only be of interest to herself: "Can the memories of a little girl really have any interest for others than the former little girl who is recalling the happiest years of her life?"[8] Rather than openly confess her fear, she expresses her doubts in the form of a question. However, it is unclear whether her doubts spring wholly from within, in which case the question is rhetorical, or whether they stem from a fear of rejection by others, in which case the question is directed at the reader. Interestingly, the syntax points to an erroneous concept of the narrative "I": the writer speaks of the little girl's memories, while in fact it is the adult, the "former little girl," who is recalling the past through present conscious effort. By falsely attributing memory to the historic "I," she underscores her own uncertainties about her autobiographical venture: a little girl lacks both the ability and the authority to write memoirs, and hence Gyp provides her reader with a reason to reject the text. At the same time, it is clear that Gyp adheres strongly to the nineteenth-century attitude toward childhood by defining it as "the happiest years of her life."

In the second and third sentences—separate paragraphs—Gyp continues in the present tense of the transcriber and answers the question raised in the first sentence of the memoirs, that of possible interest of the memoirs to others: "I don't think so, especially since this life unfolded totally unified, most of the time in the provinces, in a rather outdated milieu. And then this obligation to talk about oneself,—given that it involves only the minute incidents in which a child is involved, —troubles and displeases me."[9] In these statements, the writer posits a

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unified childhood existence, thus reinforcing that for her, childhood was a happy experience because it was a time of "pre-lapsarian wholeness." At the same time, however, by using the discursive *passé composé* tense, she informs the reader that she views this unified time of her life as irrevocably past. For this reason, she suggests that the reader will find this wholeness boring (*"I don't think so, especially since* this life unfolded totally unified") as well as trivial ("it involves *only* the minute incidents in which a child is involved"). The italicized words are indices that Gyp is attempting to erect a protective barrier between herself and the reader. Despite the fact that she, herself, has invited the reader to reject her enterprise (because the experience she is relating is both boring and trivial), she feels a need for protection because it is this very reader, not herself, who has forced her to indulge in self-revelation ("this *obligation* to write about oneself"). And she is uneasy about yielding to such pressure precisely because her childhood memories will remain inviolate and pleasurable for her only if they are not shared with others. The evocation of memory should be a solitary and untranscribed act, else the "former little girl" will betray the "little girl" that she was by exposing her former self to the critical regard of others.

At the same time as she hesitates to transcribe and thus share her childhood memories, Gyp shows great awareness of the privileged function of such memories when she states

> I would have liked to group these poor little memories by order of date, and that is impossible for me to do because they live in my memory with an incredible clarity but without any order. Something I see today reminds me of something seen in my childhood, and I am surprised that there is so little difference between the impressions that the two visions leave. It seems to me that the clear simplicity of the impressions of a little girl whom life has not yet deformed, is very close to the clairvoyance of an old lady little by little detached from conventions.[10]

The several paragraphs quoted above represent the author's overall attitude toward the writing she is about to undertake, and, as such, constitute a powerful statement of lack of self-confidence, doubts about the objective worth of the project, hesitations of all sorts.[11] Such hesitations were characteristic of Gyp's self-image, for elsewhere she denigrated the value of her fictional writing and, as a projective corollary, even expressed contempt for her readers: "I have no illusions about the intellectual value of a succession of sketches that are rough and hastily thrown together like everything I do. I have neither pride

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in myself nor consideration for readers since I see what pleases them."[12] Ultimately, literature itself became an object of her scorn: "I like and am interested in only what is living. A session at the Chamber [of Deputies], an audience at the Palais, even the inside of an omnibus amuses me more than any book. . . . The sessions on Panama and the Dreyfus Affair have left me with extraordinary memories. I cannot say as much of a single book. It is always artificial, fabricated and stinking of insincerity."[13] What differentiates the autobiographical venture from fictional writing is the specifically personal nature of the enterprise: while she felt no necessity to apologize directly to her fictional audience—indeed, she expressed nothing but contempt for her readers—she felt such a need for the autobiographical audience, due to the presentation of self as subject of the work. At the same time, she defines life, that is the aging process, as a deforming agent that destroys innocence and youth: the "pre-lapsarian wholeness of personality" can exist only before awareness of aging occurs.

Following this introductory disclaimer, Gyp momentarily abandons the present tense voice of the transcriber. She switches to her second voice, that of "the former little girl," in order to discuss her first three years in Brittany. This is the only part of the volume written primarily in the past tense, so that the two intrusions of her third voice—that of "the little girl" who speaks in the historic present tense—stand out in bold relief. Furthermore, the two cases underscore sight and verbal understanding as indices of the child's growing consciousness.

In the first instance, the author explains her lack of external observation due to total preoccupation with herself: "This country that was to incrust itself forever in me, I didn't even know that I was seeing it. I was a little animal that grazes, that scampers about—oh! how much!—and falls asleep. I was living in a kind of fog in which not a single contour was clearly outlined" (p. 44).[14] Not only are these three present tense actions very specific, but they progress toward sleep, a time for dreaming. The presentness of them is then sharply offset by evocation of a foggy landscape which masks outer reality, an oblivion that could either be experienced in a waking state, or in sleep. Use of the imperfect tense in this passage reinforces the ambiguity of the experience, because, in French, the imperfect tense denotes ongoing rather than completed past action. In the next paragraph, Gyp continues to speak as "the former little girl" but rather than use the imperfect tense, she adopts the historic *passé simple* tense to relate her experience of traveling in an open cart. At one point, a cow licks her face, and she hears the cry: "It's Christine! . . . She's going to drown herself! This is

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the first sentence heard by me that I can entirely reconstruct; the first that I understood after great effort: Christine! . . . *magere* [nurse]" (p. 44).[15] Three aspects stand out in this passage. First, use of the *passé simple*, the historic past tense, marks the author's emotional distance from the events related. Second, she claims total retrospective recall of this first sentence and, finally, she uses the Breton word *magere* to underscore that she first thought in Breton rather than in French. The latter idiosyncrasy is sustained some pages later when she claims that her first spoken words were in Breton.

After this episode, the author shifts to present tense narration for the remainder of the volume. In French, the present tense can be used as an "eternal, historical" present, or as an indication of the present moment alone. By adopting the present tense, Gyp attempts to blur the distinction between the historic "I" (the little girl) and the writing "I." As Starobinski has pointed out in this regard, "The deviation, which establishes the autobiographical reflection, is . . . double: it is at once a deviation of time and of identity. At the level of language, however, the only intruding mark is that of time. The personal mark (the first person, the 'I') remains constant. . . . the 'first person' embodies both the present reflection and the multiplicity of past states. The changes of identity are marked by verbal and attributive elements."[16] Hence, in order to understand the dynamics of Gyp's presentation of self, it is necessary to differentiate between her use of the present tense to indicate a historical event or to refer to the present moment alone.

The first event that Gyp relates after the Brittany episode is her awakening in Nancy: "I see, I understand vaguely what is happening around me." ["Je vois, je comprends vaguement ce qui se passe autour de moi." (p. 45)] What she sees and understands are, in fact, quite distinct, for she proceeds, in the next paragraph, to describe the many paintings on the wall, finishing the paragraph with: "What is all of that?" ["Qu'est-ce que c'est que tout ça?" (p. 45)], a question which points precisely to her *lack* of comprehension of what she sees. In the following paragraph, the elderly author supplies an intellectual explanation to the little girl of the experience, providing titles and names of artists to all the pictures in the room. In this instance, the shift between the historic "I" and the writing "I" is clear, even though the author makes an attempt to fuse the two by initially attributing both sight and understanding to the historic "I."

Such contrastive function of the dual present tense "I" dominates the scene that the above-quoted sentence introduces. Fairly long—five pages—the scene that follows is a key to the author's sense of growing

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consciousness and self-consciousness. The scene focuses on her refusal to speak and the manner in which she is forced into articulation, an event which brusquely throws her into direct contact with her surroundings. Upon her awakening in Nancy, the little girl is aware of three people standing by her bed discussing her refusal to speak. In this passage, the dynamics of the group are carefully noted, even though the child—the historic "I"—can only designate people by condensed description rather than by kinship status:

> the youthful young woman, who has dresses that crackle and whom I secretly call 'an itroun' [the lady] says to the white moustaches, leaning over me:
>
> Perhaps she's going to speak! . . . Has 'Bonne maman' seen her yet?
>
> No, replies the lady with the beautiful hands. We're going to take her to her in a short while . . . Come, Jeanette, I'm going to teach you how to bathe and dress her.
>
> And since I hide my face with my arm, the white moustache says:
>
> —My little Minon, you must obey! (p. 45)[17]

The movement of these characters reveals much of the genesis of the little girl's feelings for her family. Of the three, only the man physically approaches her ("leaning over me"); only he directly speaks to her. Moreover, she unconsciously betrays herself by hiding her face when "beautiful hands" speaks to the child's maid, Jeannette, about her. Such self-betrayal reveals that she understands, but is unwilling rather than unable to speak. The adults are not fooled by these childish ploys, moreover, because several pages later, she reports her grandmother wondering whether she can hear, and her grandfather replies: "Ah! as for that, yes! . . . the proof is that she does everything that she's told . . . when she wants to!" (p. 47) ["Ah! pour ça, oui! . . . la preuve, c'est qu'elle fait tout ce qu'on lui dit . . . quand ça lui plaît!"] Still later, her great grandmother tells her that she absolutely must speak and the little girl closes her eyes "so as not to show that in fact I could speak" (p. 49) ["pour ne pas laisser voir que je pourrais parler en effet"] Like the grandfather, the great-grandmother is not taken in by this ruse.

After Gyp describes the meeting between herself as a little girl and Jeannette, her maid, she recapitulates the preceding page of dialogue. Rather than merely presenting the same information, however, she analyzes the scene as an awakening of her reasoning faculties, hence reintroducing the present tense voice of the transcriber.

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> From this instant on . . . I begin not only to discern but, if I may say so, to analyze things. From my awakening in my bedroom in Nancy,—the bedroom of battles, as it was called,—date my first precise sensations, my first understanding of life, and I try to engrave in my yet amorphous brain all of these new things. Pretty hands is Grandmother; the enormous moustaches is Grandfather . . . It is moreover he whom I already knew the best. I am aware that he has often called me 'little minon!' That's funny . . . I had never understood that. Jeannette, who is so nice, is my maid ["bonne"] What is a maid? 'Bonne maman' is that to which they're going to take me in a short while, it appears. . . . And the lady who crackles, what is that? (p. 46)[18]

The shift of narrative voice and the sequence in which people are introduced to the reader are very revealing. In the first sentence, she speaks in the voice of the transcriber, assimilating her literal awakening in Nancy to the awakening of her critical faculties. Whereas at the very beginning of the author's narrative in Brittany she lived in a fog, in Nancy she begins to distinguish and to analyze her surroundings. The second sentence is divided between two narrative voices. In the first part of the sentence—"From my awakening in my bedroom in Nancy—the bedroom of battles, as it was called,—date my first precise sensations, my first understanding of life"—all of the information is presented in the detached and objective manner of one recalling the past, which is the present "I" of the transcriber. But the second part—"and I try to engrave in my yet amorphous brain all of these new things"—is clearly from the point of view of the little girl, the historic "I," because the adult would not define her brain as in a formative stage, nor would the things she sees be new.

After this objective statement, Gyp identifies the people around her. Although "the lady who crackles" was mentioned first in the dialogue scene, in the recapitulation she comes last, which suggests an unconscious rejection of this person. Furthermore, between the first and second presentation, the woman has undergone a profound change, due to condensation of description. In the dialogue scene, she was "the fresh young woman who has dresses that crackle and whom I secretly call '*an itroun*' [the lady]" and in the explanation she becomes "the young woman who crackles." Such condensation and deletion of positive elements indicate a shift in attitude toward this person who is, in fact, the child's mother.

Identification of the grandfather leads to the ambiguous commentary: "I am aware that he has often called me "little minon." Ambiguous because, through mixture of present and past tenses, it is

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unclear whether the conscious discovery is made by the little girl or by the mature writer looking back after a lifetime of experience. The next line, however, is clearly the writing "I" making a discovery about her past: "That's funny . . . I had never understood that." Only through the transcription of memory does the past take on significant meaning for the writer, thus providing understanding that was denied to the little girl of the experience. Finally, in speaking of her grandfather, she positively states that "It is moreover he whom I knew the best." A clear explanation is provided in that her grandfather has often called her "little Minon," suggesting that the little girl's visual observation was most acute when the object of her observation engaged in direct discourse with her. In this passage, sight is triggered by speech, and hence language becomes a primary vehicle for consciousness.

The concept of language is the focal point of the next few pages. The author explains that speech was both a temptation and a threat: "For I could do it if I had wanted to, and I wanted to very much. I had often tried, very softly, hiding my head under the blanket, when I was all alone. But I understood vaguely that in speaking, I would lift up the curtain that still separated me from others and allowed me to isolate myself" (p. 47).[19] Because the threat of destroying a comfortable barrier is greater than the desire to communicate, the little girl persists in her silence until her great-grandmother forces her into speech with a spanking. Her great-grandmother's action is, in effect, a second birth for the little girl: the lifting of the veil of incommunicability between herself and others duplicates her emergence from the silent womb to the wide world. At first she doesn't understand what is happening, but as soon as she relates the word to the action, she screams "Ma Doué" ("My God" in Breton). Even though forced into speech, she spontaneously uses Breton in a last effort to remain, as it were, behind the curtain of incommunicability. After this incident, the author makes a crucial statement which points very clearly to the link between verbal articulation and consciousness of her surroundings: "While my grandparents look at me happily, and Bonne maman ironically, and while Jeannette wipes me gently with a large iris-scented cloth, I make an inventory of my family, that I see in reality for the first time" (p. 50).[20] True sight, she explains, depends on the act of speech. She then continues with another description of the people around her, but this time she goes into great detail rather than present her family through telegraphic condensation. Finally, she recapitulates the entire scene of her awakening in Nancy and its aftermath, once again underlining the significance of that day in terms of the awakening of her consciousness:

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"After this strange and abrupt awakening which initiates me to things that were until then indistinct" (p. 51) ["Après cet éveil étrange et brusque qui m'initie à des choses jusqu'alors indistinctes."]

In a few pages, we see how Gyp has traced her evolution from a pre-verbal "animalistic" state ("I was a little animal") in which she is living in a fog, oblivious to her surroundings due to her inability to articulate, to that of a verbal state in which she perceives her environment as a distinct reality. Gyp attributed great significance to the role of language in this transition and, indeed, the novelty of her narration resides in her unique approach to presentation of the historic "I," the "former little girl." Rousseau, the autobiographer of whom it is frequently said that he introduced the Self into literature, clearly adhered to the same view of childhood as did Gyp. However, as Jean Starobinski has so well stated about the *Confessions,* Rousseau expresses the feeling of lost happiness and looks back longingly to his childhood with an "elegiac tone" but then reverts to a "picaresque tone" to establish his distance from the past, to ironically condemn the past as a time of weakness, of disgrace.[21] Even though the two tones are frequently intermingled in Rousseau, difference in tense establishes when he is speaking of the past, when of the present. Olney describes a similar process in Richard Wright's autobiography, *Black Boy,* saying that the richness of Wright's work derives from the fusion of the two voices in the book, one the voice of "Black Boy" (of past experience), the other, the voice of "Richard Wright" the writer (of present vision). However, even though Wright does not indulge in irony towards his former self, the "Black Boy," his *former self,* is a conscious creation by the adult writer, and, as in Rousseau, tenses indicate the shift between past experience and present reflection.[22] For Gyp, however, the time of childhood, of "pre-lapsarian wholeness," is so important to her sense of self that she cannot bear to distance her present self from the historic "I." For this reason, she deliberately maintains a present tense voice in an attempt to deny that the past is, indeed, irrevocably past.

Other autobiographical documentation sheds light on Gyp's obsession about the unity of her identity. In 1918, she confided in a letter to Michel Missoffe, her close friend and future biographer, that: "I was 3 or 4 when the name Sybille, under which I had been declared, was taken away from me, largely due to Octave Feuillet's novel and a little due to my physique which was found wanting. They [the family] wanted (in memory of the orator) to call me Gabrielle, which didn't figure on my birth or baptismal certificates and which displeased me horribly. I begged for the name Antoinette which belonged to me. In

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vain. They imposed a name which wasn't mine and that I detested."[23] Denial of her name, her very identity, was a deeply traumatic event for the future writer, particularly since, according to the memoirs, this event occured at approximately the same time as she began to speak. To compound the gravity of the situation, she was an only child, the last of the great Mirabeau family, and hence suffered lifelong guilt as a result of her gender, a guilt that was instilled in her from childhood, about having betrayed her ancestors.[24] By having imposed on her the feminine version of the name of her most famous forerunner, Gyp was literally forced to answer for her betrayal. For this reason, Gyp's insistent use of the personal pronoun "I" with the present tense in the first volume of memoirs constitutes her attempt to avenge the childhood assault on her sense of identity.

Many autobiographers provide information about the history of their names, but often attach little significance to them. The fact that many of them rose from obscurity to fame as a result of their autobiographies supports the thesis that, for many, identity is most fully experienced and expressed through the act of writing. Gyp, however, was born with a prominent and ancient family name, and added to this public identity when she married. Her pen name, a new identity, was adopted initially as a mask to protect her against disclosure, a disclosure that provoked public and family censure. Though she carefully constructed a personality in order to infuse her pen name with authority, she was nonetheless forced to suffer—once again—over her social name, her initial identity.

The case of Elias Canetti, the 1981 Nobel prizewinner in literature, serves as an excellent example for comparison. In his autobiography *The Tongue Set Free,* Canetti, like Gyp, speaks of the importance of his name. For him, however, identity with his name was as firmly and positively embedded as Gyp's sense of self was disturbed by denial of her name. After describing the circumcision of his brother, Canetti writes: "My brother was named after my mother's father Nissim, and they explained that I was the eldest son and was therefore named after my paternal grandfather. The position of eldest son was so greatly emphasized that I remained conscious of it from that moment of the circumcision and never lost my pride in it."[25] Through his name, Canetti was bonded to his family history, but for positive reasons.

If importance of the name in the establishment of a sense of identity is a commonplace notion, it is also evident that such an identity springs from oral, not literary, tradition. For Gyp, unsettled in her identity within the universe of language, the trauma cut even deeper,

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for her first language was not French but Breton. The first words that she spoke—in Breton—elicited a reaction of horror from her mother. And Gyp admits that, even before she uttered her first words, "Everything . . . was jumbled up at that moment in Breton and French together, in my head that gave me the impression of being made out of cotton" (p. 47).[26] She admits that, later, after she began to speak, she even talked to herself in the mirror, but realized that, "For some time, I have stopped talking to myself in Breton. And, what seems peculiar to me, I don't even think in Breton anymore. . . . At the beginning, I never used to think in French. I translated while speaking, it was truly an effort. Unconsciously, I reproach myself for forgetting 'my' language" (p. 66).[27]

Like Gyp, Canetti also experienced a problem with language in early childhood but, as in the case of his name, the language question was not traumatic. As a child, Canetti spoke Ladino in the home, but, to each other his parents spoke German "which I was not allowed to understand." Later, however, after he learned German, he came to a realization: "I don't know at what point in time, on what occasion, this or that translated itself. I never probed into the matter; perhaps I was afraid to destroy my most precious memories with a methodical examination based on rigorous principles. I can say only one thing with certainty: the events of those years are present to my mind in all their strength and freshness (I've fed on them for over sixty years), but the vast majority are tied to words I did not know at that time. It seems natural to me to write them down now; I don't have the feeling that I am changing or warping anything. It is not like the literary translation of a book from one language to another, it is a translation that happened of its own accord in my unconscious."[28] For the sixty-odd year old man, the loss of his native Ladino is experienced as a natural event, whereas the eighty-year old Gyp still reproaches herself—consciously, not unconsciously, as she claims—for the loss of "her" language.

If identity starts with the self, it grows immeasurably as the speaker learns to identify others. Gyp explains that as soon as she could speak, she began to appreciate her discrete position in the universe by forms of address that she was to use with others and that others used with her. Frequent reference to "tu" and "vous" indicates that, even as a child, she was extremely sensitive to the ramifications of address and, as such, her memoirs constitute an interesting case study of what Brown and Gilman refer to as "the pronouns of power and solidarity" within a static society.[29] The strict social code of address—titles, proper names, pronouns—that Gyp internalized as a child constituted

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yet another oral assault on her sense of identity: *she* had to obey stringent rules of address with others, whereas her own family could unjustly thwart her of her own proper name. Imposition of a code of speech represented a powerful form of social control but was by no means the only form of control to which Gyp—in many ways a prototypical nineteenth-century aristocratic child—was subject. The first words she recollects hearing her grandfather saying were: "You must obey" (p. 45) ["il faut obéir"]. Such obedience was to be unquestioning, for Gyp's grandfather, a retired colonel, insisted on obedience in the home as in the military. If at first Gyp's refusal to speak was viewed as an act of stubborn will which had to be dominated by a spanking, her determination to speak was also viewed as a sign of the very will that adults around her tried to curb; hence, to curb her speech was to discipline her. As Gyp relates, she was three or four when the Emperor Napoleon III was to visit her city. When she expressed her delight at the prospect of seeing the Emperor, her grandfather, a legitimist, declared that she wouldn't see him. Her outburst of will power was immediately squashed: " 'I want to see him! I want!' I feel that I am red, and I want to cry. Grandfather, surprised by this agitation, merely says: 'First of all a little girl doesn't say "I want," next, why do you want to see the Emperor?' " (p. 55)[30] In her memoirs, Gyp was able to say whatever she wanted without fear of reproval or imposition of silence, and in this sense, the motivation for her enterprise is somewhat similar to that of many memorialists who seek to "rewrite" history. In Gyp's case, however, the desire was to "write" and not "rewrite" her own history, which is undoubtedly why her memoirs stop just at the time she begins her career: having carefully constructed her Gyp persona throughout her career as writer and Right-wing militant, she would now "construct" in writing a pre-Gyp life that could be seen as a logical antecedent to the public life.

The power of the spoken word on Gyp's sense of identity did not diminish with the passage of time. On the contrary, it was imposed as the very model she was to use for writing. She began her literary career in 1879 as a writer for the frivolous and slightly scandalous weekly newspaper, *La Vie Parisienne,* whose editor, Marcelin, taught all of his contributors—many of whom were people from high society—how to write. In his preface to Marcelin's memoirs, *Souvenirs de la Vie Parisienne,* Hippolyte Taine explains that Marcelin's recipe for success lay in his insistence on authenticity as well as in his ability to develop in his writers a style that imitated conversation:

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> Often, he gave the author the title and subject; sometimes he furnished him with a complete outline. When someone brought him a little story or a scene, he had it told out loud to him; . . . his interruptions forced the author to prune tedious passages, his questions forced the author to fill in gaps. He suggested additions, he imposed cuts, he indicated reworkings; he forced him to put into every dialogue or narrative a beginning, a middle and an end; . . . he taught him the art of making and following an outline.
>
> Many talents were thus formed under his hand. He went out looking for society people, . . . all of whom knew how to chat and who had never thought of writing; he proved to them that one is not more difficult than the other, *providing that one writes as one speaks* [emphasis mine], as one speaks in one's club among men, as one speaks in a salon to elegant women or women of the *demi-monde,* that is to say smartly, freely, sometimes too freely, with no other goal than to amuse, for a few minutes, people who are quick to get bored, to yawn and to go away.[31]

Gyp never forgot this training and, even after she began to write narrative rather than dialogue novels, dialogue—speech—dominates her work.

At the beginning of this essay, I raised a question: will a writer for whom the spoken word is the primary metaphor for consciousness present the self in a different way than will a writer who uses literary models? In answer to my question, based on this study of Gyp, I say yes. Various critics of autobiography have discussed in depth the question of identity. Some view the "I" as a duality between the present "I" of the writer and the past "I" of the person who lived what is being related,[32] whereas others define the dichotomy as between the "I" perceived externally by others and the internal "I" perceived only by self.[33] A third group rejects the notion that the "I" can refer to anyone but the "scriptor" at the precise moment in which the act of writing takes place, and that the past exists only as a function of present evocation,[34] whereas Lejeune and his followers see identity as a "relation of relation": author is to extra-textual model as narrator is to character within the text.[35] The problem of interpretation of the autobiographical "I" is compounded, moreover, when one deals with autobiographers who define themselves as professional writers in that they tend "to produce autobiography in various guises and disguises in every work and then . . . seek a unique form in a work properly called 'an autobiography' . . . that may reflect the life and vision of this individual writer alone."[36] Though they have expounded many interesting

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and useful theories, none of these critics[37] have focused on the *source* of a writer's consciousness in terms of models he or she uses for writing. The reason for this is that most contemporary theoreticians, and particularly those of the French school, are interested in autobiography as *text*. As a result, they have focused on *graphe* at the expense of *bios* from which *autos* stems.

NOTES

1. James Olney, "Autobiography and the Cultural Moment: A Thematic, Historical and Bibliographical Introduction" in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical,* ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980). Specific page references to this article will be included in the opening paragraph of my essay in parentheses after the quotation.
2. William L. Howarth, "Some Principles of Autobiography" in *Autobiography: Essays,* p. 113.
3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions* in *Vie et Oeuvres de J.-J. Rousseau,* avec des notes explicatives par Albert Schinz (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1921), p. 6.
4. Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 6.
5. Pascal, p. 85.
6. Olney, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 264.
7. David J. DeLaura, "The Allegory of Life: The Autobiographical Impulse in Victorian Prose" in *Approaches to Victorian Autobiography,* ed. George P. Landow (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1979), p. 341.
8. Gyp, "Souvenirs d'une petite fille," I, *Revue des Deux Mondes,* tome XXXVIII (1927), p. 43. Subsequent references to this text are included in parentheses after the quotation; footnotes will be used to provide the original French text. All translations by author. "Est-ce que, vraiment, les souvenirs d'une petite fille peuvent avoir un quelconque intérêt pour d'autres que l'ancienne petite fille, qui se rappelle joyeusement les meilleures années de sa vie?"
9. "Il me semble que non, alors surtout que cette vie s'est écoulée toute unie et, la plupart du temps en province, dans un milieu plutôt suranné. Et puis, cette obligation de se raconter soi-même,—étant donné qu'il ne s'agit que des menus incidents auxquels un enfant est mêlé,—me trouble et me déplaît."
10. "J'aurais voulu grouper ces pauvres petits souvenirs par ordre de dates, et cela m'est impossible, parce qu'ils revivent dans ma mémoire avec une incroyable netteté, mais sans aucun ordre. Une chose que je vois aujourd'hui me rappelle une chose vue dans mon enfance, et je m'étonne qu'il y ait si peu de différence entre les impressions que laissent les deux visions. Il me semble que la simplicité claire des impressions d'une petite fille que n'a pas encore déformée la vie, est très proche de la clairvoyance d'une vieille femme peu à peu détachée des conventions."
11. Arana borrows from psychoanalytic procedure and suggests that, just as psychoanalysis focuses on the elucidation of the present, so too do "The autobiogra-

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pher's statements in the present tense tell us which issues he still considers problematic and immediate . . . at the time of writing." See R. Victoria Arana, "The Psychoaesthetics of Autobiography," *Biography,* 6, No. 1 (Winter 1983), p. 61.

12. Undated letter from Gyp to Michel Missoffe, in Michel Missoffe, *Gyp et ses amis* (Paris: Flammarion, 1932), pp. 65–66: "Je suis sans illusion sur la valeur intellectuelle d'une succession de tableaux bâclés et galopés comme tout ce que je fais. Je n'ai ni amour-propre ni grande considération pour les lecteurs puisque je vois ce qui leur plaît."

13. Gyp to Missoffe, in Missoffe, pp. 66–67: "Je n'aime et je ne m'intéresse qu'à ce qui vit. Une séance à la Chambre, une audience au Palais, même un intérieur d'omnibus, m'amusent plus que n'importe quel livre. . . . Les séances du Panama et de l'affaire Dreyfus m'ont laissé des souvenirs extraordinaires. Je ne puis en dire autant d'aucun livre. C'est toujours artificiel, fabriqué, et puant d'insincérité."

14. "Ce pays qui devait s'incruster pour toujours en moi, je ne savais même pas que je le voyais. J'étais un petit animal qui broute, qui grouille—oh! combien!—et s'endort. Je vivais dans une espèce de brouillard où ne se dessinait nettement aucun contour."

15. "C'est Christine! . . . Elle va lui dévorer la tete! C'est la première phrase entendue par moi que je puisse reconstituer entièrement; la première que j'ai comprise après un grand effort: Christine! . . . *magere*"

16. Jean Starobinski, "The Style of Autobiography," trans. Seymour Chatman, in *Autobiography: Essays,* p. 79.

17. "la jeune femme fraîche, qui a des robes qui craquent et que j'appelle en moi-même 'an itroun' [la dame] dit aux moustaches blanches, inclinées vers moi:—Elle va peut-être parler! . . . Est-ce que Bonne maman l'a déjà vue?—Non, répond la dame aux belles mains. On va la lui conduire tout à l'heure . . . Venez, Jeannette, je vais vous apprendre à faire sa toilette. Et comme je cache ma figure avec mon bras, la moustache blanche dit:—Mon petit Minon, il faut obéir!"

18. "Dès cet instant . . . je commence, non seulement à discerner, mais, si je puis dire, à analyser les choses. De mon réveil dans ma chambre de Nancy,—la chambre aux batailles, comme on l'appelait,—datent mes premières sensations précises, ma première compréhension de la vie, et je cherche à graver dans mon cerveau encore amorphe toutes ces choses nouvelles. Les jolies mains, c'est Grand-mère; les grosses moustaches, c'est Grandpère . . . C'est d'ailleurs lui que je connaissais déjà le mieux. J'ai conscience qu'il m'a très souvent appellé 'petit minon!' C'est drôle! . . . j'avais jamais compris ça. Jeannette, qui est si gentille, c'est ma bonne. Qu'est ce que c'est, une bonne? . . . 'Bonne maman'. c'est ça à quoi on va me conduire tout à l'heure, il paraît . . . Et la dame qui craque, c'est quoi?"

19. "Car je le pouvais si je l'eusse voulu, et j'en avais une terrible envie. J'avais essayé souvent, tout bas, en me cachant la tête sous ma couverture, quand j'étais toute seule. Mais je comprenais vaguement qu'en parlant, j'entrouvrirais le rideau qui me séparait encore des autres et me permettait de m'isoler."

20. "Tandis que mes grandparents me regardent d'un air heureux, et Bonne maman d'un air narquois, et que Jeannette m'essuie doucement avec un grand drap

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qui sent l'iris, je fais l'inventaire de ma famille, que je vois en réalité pour la première fois."

21. Starobinski, pp. 82–83.
22. Olney, "Some Versions of Memory/Some Versions of *Bios:* the Ontology of Autobiography" in *Autobiography: Essays,* pp. 243–248.
23. Missoffe, pp. 246–247: "J'avais 3 ou 4 ans lorsqu'on m'enleva le nom de Sybille, sous lequel j'avais été déclarée, beaucoup à cause du roman d'Octava Feuillet et un peu aussi à cause de mon physique que l'on trouvait insuffisant. On voulait (en souvenir de l'orateur) me donner le prénom de Gabrielle, qui ne figurait pas sur mes actes de naissance et de baptême, et qui me déplaisait affreusement. Je réclamais celui d'Antoinette qui m'appartenait. En vain. On m'imposa un nom qui n'était pas le mien et que je détestais."
24. In her memoirs, Gyp states that it was her grandfather who first made her aware that, because she was a girl, her famed ancestral name would die out with her (p. 55). The journalist Lucien Corpechot also mentions this in his memoirs: " 'What I would have liked to be,' Gyp replied one day to a journalist who asked her this question for I don't know what magazine, 'mon Dieu, Colonel Marchand! or else Lyautey!' And turning toward us: 'It is a reproach my family made during my entire childhood, that of not being a boy! . . . And no one, of course, regrets it as much as I' " *Souvenirs d'un journaliste* (Paris: Plon, 1937), 3: 79.
25. Elias Canetti, *The Tongue Set Free* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), p. 16.
26. "Tout . . . se bousculait à ce moment-là en breton et en français mélangés, dans ma tête qui me faisait l'effet d'être en coton."
27. "Depuis quelque temps, j'ai cessé de me parler en breton. Et, ce qui me paraît singulier, c'est qui je ne pense plus en breton non plus . . . Au commencement, je ne pensais jamais en francais. Je traduisais en parlant, c'était un véritable effort. Inconsciemment, je me reproche cet oubli de 'ma' langue."
28. Canetti, p. 10.
29. R. Brown and A. Gilman, "The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity" in *Communication in Face to Face Interaction,* ed. John Laver and Sally Hutcheson (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1972).
30. " 'Je veux le voir! Je veux!' Je sens que je suis rouge, et j'ai envie de pleurer. Grandpère, étonné de cette agitation, dit seulement: 'D'abord une petite fille ne dit pas 'je veux', ensuite, pourquoi veux-tu voir l'Empereur?' "
31. Marcelin, *Souvenirs de la Vie Parisienne,* préface de H. Taine (Paris: Victor Havard, 1888), pp. 16–17.
32. Olney, "Some Versions of Memory," p. 248.
33. Stephen Spender, "Confessions and Autobiography" in *Autobiography: Essays,* p. 116; Elisabeth W. Bruss, "L'autobiographie considérée comme acte littéraire," *Poétique,* No. 17 (1974), p. 24.
34. Starobinski's notion of the "scripteur," and of the function of the present-tense writing "I" ("The Style of Autobiography") is very similar to Arana's definition of the "inscriber" and the role of the present for the analysand in psychoanalysis ("The Psychoaesthetics").
35. Philippe Lejeune, "Le Pacte autobiographique," *Poétique,* No. 14 (1973), pp. 157–158. Lejeune has recently updated his reflections and, in so doing, modified somewhat his earlier definitions; he faults his original premise for its

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rigidity and admits that "degrees of identity" are possible. See Lejeune, "Le Pacte autobiographique (bis)," *Poétique,* No. 56 (1983), p. 421.

36. Olney, "The Ontology," p. 236.

37. In fact, Barret J. Mandel speaks of source of consciousness as being "rooted in the unseen (but not unseeing) being" but he mentions this in support of his argument *against* "the misconception that autobiography, even if it is not life *per se,* represents recollections or memories of the past. . . . Thus it is one thing to hold memories and another thing to write—that is, to compose the truth of one's life in words." See Barret J. Mandel, "Full of Life Now" in *Autobiography: Essays,* pp. 49–50. My contention is that Gyp's consciousness, her deep sense of self, was molded by early awareness of the power of speech, and that it was the *memory* of this awareness that not only motivated her entire autobiographical enterprise, but also caused Gyp to adopt the present tense throughout. By attempting to relive the awakening of this consciousness, she was avenging the childhood assault on her sense of self.

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Mary Ann Rygiel

Sofya Kovalevskaya's *A Russian Childhood* As Poetic Autobiography

In 1888–89, Sofya Vasilievna Kovalevskaya wrote a memoir of her early childhood in the Russia of 1850–1865. Kovalevskaya's adult life, as well as the literary quality of her memoir, *A Russian Childhood,* have an undeniable interest for the late twentieth-century reader.[1]

Sofya Kovalevskaya, née Sofya Korvin-Krukovskaya, was born January 15, at Moscow in the feudal Russia of 1850. Her father was General Vasily Vasilievich Korvin-Krukovsky, a Russian artillery officer and prosperous landowner. Her mother, Elizabeth Fyodorovna Korvin-Krukovskaya, was a musically accomplished offspring of the mathematically accomplished Shubert family. Both her father, a military topographer, and her grandfather, an astronomer, used applied mathematics in their work. Sofya Vasilievna Kovalevskaya may therefore owe a genetic debt to her mother's side of the family for her own mathematical gifts. When Kovalevskaya left Russia in 1868 to pursue university training, she left as a newlywed and was initially under the protection of her husband, Vladimir Kovalevsky. Young Russian women could not receive university degrees in their own country, and they were not freed from the protection of their patriarchal families until they married. But Kovalevskaya and her sister Anyuta belonged to a group of young Russian men and women who conspired to enter into marriage in name only, in order to free female members of their circle to travel abroad to pursue a higher education, under the nominal protection of an idealistic spouse who may have had no intention of ever seeking conjugal marital rights.

After Kovalevskaya attended lectures for three semesters at the Uni-

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versity of Heidelberg, she sought instruction from Karl Weierstrass, Professor of Mathematics at the University of Berlin and a leading exponent of modern analysis. University rules here, too, barred female enrollment, but Weierstrass was sufficiently impressed with Kovalevskaya's character and ability to tutor her privately for four years. She received a Ph.D. *in absentia* from the University of Göttingen in 1874, thereby becoming the first woman in modern Europe to receive the doctorate in mathematics (Koblitz, p. 270). Her stern course of celibate fidelity to mathematics was followed by six years of consummated married life in society in St. Petersburg, during which time a daughter was born. Kovalevskaya returned to mathematical research in 1880. Her earthly tie to her husband ended with his suicide in 1883. In 1884 she received an appointment at Stockholm University. Here she was a faculty member in mathematics until her untimely death on February 10, 1891, of complications from a cold, pleurisy or pneumonia (Koblitz, p. 234). She was by virtue of this position the first woman "in Europe outside of Italy to have a university chair in any field" (Koblitz, p. 270). If Kovalevskaya herself was a groundbreaker, her early circle of friends in Russia from the pre-émigré period included other women who were no less firsts in their own fields.[2] Kovalevskaya's mathematical work included nine original articles in print. She was also editor of *Acta Mathematica.* In 1888, she received the coveted Prix Bordin of the French Academy of Sciences, a prize which had been awarded only ten times in a fifty-year period, for her paper on the rotation of a solid body around a fixed point. In addition to the Prix Bordin paper, her particular contributions to the field of mathematics include important early work in the field of partial differential equations. Her major literary work, her autobiography, is the subject of this paper.

When Kovalevskaya's autobiography was first published, it was well received by critics. One Russian reviewer, Semevsky, compared it favorably with Tolstoy's *Childhood* (Stillman, x), and a London reviewer compared it with Turgenev's novel, *Fathers and Sons* (Koblitz, p. 266). By the 1890s, it had been translated and published in eight languages in addition to Swedish and Russian. Afterwards, however, the book fell into obscurity outside Russia and outside mathematical circles (Stillman, xi).

Given the compelling life of Kovalevskaya, and the literary quality of her autobiography, we must ask why her autobiography is not widely known. Three related reasons have rendered her work unknown to American readers. The first is Kovalevskaya's adult occupa-

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tion as professor of mathematics. People outside the physical sciences tend to think of mathematics as a seamless and completed web, without regard to its history of thinkers building upon, extending, and correcting previous thinkers' results, results which were the received, "correct," textbook mathematics in their day. E. T. Bell asserts that "mathematicians as a class are probably less familiar to the general reader than any other group of brain workers" (Bell, p. 8). Lack of reader interest in the lives of mathematicians may be fostered by an assumption that these lives were uniformly grey and pedantic on the one hand, and on the other, the suspicion that Poincaré's view that "the majority of human beings are mathematical imbeciles" (Bell, p. 550) reflects a general hauteur and disdain felt by the class of mathematicians towards the class of nonmathematicians.

The second reason for the obscurity of *A Russian Childhood* resides in the virtual unavailability of Kovalevskaya to English-speaking readers, at least in America. Leo Wiener's standard two volume English translation *Anthology of Russian Literature,* which was first published in 1902 and later reissued in 1967, contains no selection from Kovalevskaya nor any reference to her. For the intrepid who wanted to venture beyond stock anthologized material, two earlier book-length translations of Kovalevskaya's autobiography were available, but the circumstances of these translations did little to assure a work of quality which would gain a lasting readership.[3]

The third reason for the unfamiliarity of Kovalevskaya's autobiography lies in the response to it by some of the readers within scientific circles. For example, the book did not escape the censure of Lewis Pyenson, Professor at L'Institut d'histoire et de sociopolitique des sciences, Université de Montréal, and co-editor of the series Historical Studies in the Physical Sciences. In his introduction to theoretical physicist Leopold Infeld's *Why I Left Canada,*[4] Pyenson sets up a contrast between Kovalevskaya's work and the autobiography of Infeld, *Quest: The Evolution of a Scientist* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Doran, 1941). In order to praise Infeld, Pyenson disparages Kovalevskaya as a memoirist, like most nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scientist autobiographers. Pyenson's comments about Kovalevskaya are as follows:

> Kovalevsky's account is predictable and conventional. It offers no indication that the Russian noble's daughter, whose emotional lines are so carefully revealed, will become the greatest woman mathematician of the nineteenth century. Kovalevsky chooses not to speak of intellectual

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affairs. The reader is left without a clear idea of the narrator's vision of herself, in contrast to Infeld's doubt-ridden narrative. (Pyenson, p. 11)

These puzzling comments reveal an uncertain grasp of the genre of autobiography, as will be discussed further on, and suggest such lack of understanding as a third reason why Kovalevskaya's autobiography is generally unknown.

As there were reasons before for the desuetude into which Kovalevskaya's autobiography had fallen, there are reasons now for its resurrection. The first reason is a growing interest by nonscientists in learning more about major ideas in science and technology.[5] Witness the popularity of the works of such research scientists who also write for wider audiences as Jacob Bronowski, Carl Sagan, Steven Weinberg, and Stephen Jay Gould. The autobiographies and biographies of scientists remove the nonspecialist's hidden fear that scientists are actually a different species. Kovalevskaya's book provides insight into the childhood of a mathematician and requires no knowledge of mathematics.

The second reason for reading Kovalevskaya's autobiography now is the availability of Stillman's translation, chosen for inclusion in *Sources and Translation Series of the Russian Institute,* Columbia University. Stillman's ability as a translator was demonstrated in her earlier critically acclaimed translation of the memoirs of Anna Dostoevsky, *Reminiscences.*

The third reason is the most important. Intense critical focus over the past twenty-five years has produced a better understanding of autobiography as a literary genre.[6] This enlarged notion of autobiography as a genre can profitably be applied to understanding Sofya Kovalevskaya's book and establishing it as a worthy addition to the canon.[7]

It is not clear what literary genre Lewis Pyenson believes Kovalevskaya's autobiography to be a "conventional" example of. The referent might be the autobiographies by nineteenth-century Russian writers, or eighteenth- or nineteenth-century Russian women writers —something along the lines of the Russian family chronicle. Yet the translator Stillman roundly dismisses this possibility (Stillman, p. 36). One may also remember the opening of *Anna Karenina:* "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." In this spirit, is not the life of an unhappy family member also a unique story? Perhaps Pyenson was referring to personal writing by eighteenth- or nineteenth-century women mathematicians. However, the latter category is small, and one only awkwardly speaks of conven-

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tions of a subgenre which includes such disparate materials as philosophical essays and letters to children. Thus, Pyenson's criticism of the supposed "conventionality" of Kovalevskaya's work seems vague and unsubstantiated. His criticisms of omissions in her work are more serious. I turn to this point now.

Pyenson criticizes Kovalevskaya's work for omitting praise of or reference to her later greatness. Pyenson has a specific implicit standard for scientific autobiography, i.e., that it should preferably be a psychological account of a scientist engaged in the struggle of vocation formation (this is Infeld's contribution to the genre), and, essentially, an account of the scientist later engaged in the scientific calling. The works which form the standard for Pyenson are the autobiographies of Freud and Einstein, "stories," he says, of "extraordinary single-minded purpose" in which "the distinction between intellectual and psychological components is not of central importance for the reader." Pyenson admires these works for being at once "remote and awe-inspiring" (Pyenson, pp. 12–13).

If internally conceived task formation and completion is the hallmark of the "scientific personality," and the celebration of such the proper focus of the scientific autobiography,[9] then Sofya Kovalevskaya's work is a failure. However, there are other ways than Pyenson's of assessing Kovalevskaya's work.

It is significant, after all, that the memoir is limited to Kovalevskaya's early years and ends when she is fifteen. The critic Roy Pascal, who, incidentally, preceded Pyenson in noting the chaste focus on work in the scientific autobiography, reserves a special category for autobiographies of childhood. He views them as the "purest form of autobiography," works which "show the formation of a temperament, not a public or even a private character" (Pascal, p. 85).

Kovalevskaya has written this "purest form." As an autobiographer of childhood, she attempts to strip off the accretions of time and custom and feel the pulse of early life as it was lived. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge the impossibility of the adult autobiographer acting simply and exclusively as a scribe. Kovalevskaya plumbs the depths of her being, rather than attempting to ratify her later "calling." The temperament which we see being formed in her childhood has certain characteristics in common with the mature woman, however. We see the emergence of a person who would be able in later years to work at her desk for long hours without respite, a person who could find in relentless work a cure for her sense of guilt over her husband's suicide, a person who, like Poincaré (see Bell, pp. 550–551), does not abandon

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the search for a solution to a mathematical problem, but simply allows it to be immured in the underground of the consciousness. Kovalevskaya, unlike her sister, does not shiftingly, restlessly seek diversion. One hallmark of the mathematician is the ability to concentrate and the lack of need for equipment other than paper or blackboard. Expensive laboratories, expensive research schemes, are not part of the mathematician's livery. Her keen observation of a scene in nature which later appears in a dream, shifting, as dream material does, and her ability to accommodate in her writing this sudden transformation of the scene (Stillman, pp. 93–94)—this may be an early sign of the configural imagination which Bronowski sees as the essence of mathematics.[10] These aspects of temperament are a necessary, if not a sufficient, subset of the overall set which constitutes the creative mathematician. What must be added, of course, are the choice of mathematics as a discipline, a continuing dedication to it, the opportunity to pursue it—and ability in it. Let us turn now to the details of the temperament.

Kovalevskaya was a lonely, studious, intense child. By the accident of birth order, she was the emotionally neglected middle child, born after a brilliant, daring, and beautiful sister, Anyuta, and before a younger brother, Fedya, the all-important male completion to a patriarchal nineteenth-century Russian family headed by a general. Consigned to the tutelage of Miss Smith, an English governess who was determined "to cultivate a seed-plot of English misses in a Russian manorial home implanted for ages and generations with gentry customs, slovenliness and laxity" (Stillman, p. 80), Sofya displays a steadiness of application to her own hidden purposes and an acute ability to concentrate. She relates how she was forced to go underground with her poetic compositions because of the ruthlessness of Miss Smith, who ferreted out all written poetic efforts with a zeal worthy of David Copperfield's "headmaster" at Salem House, Mr. Creackle. She took to composing in her head "like the bards of old," then "confiding" the verses to the bouncing ball she was forced to play with for required recreation from studies. Kovalevskaya's stealthy reading in the library and her talks with her beloved "mathematical Uncle," Pyotr Vasilievich Krukovsky, show her inability to accept a restricted female role. She chose not to follow the example of her mother, an adult woman at once lovely and childish.

Kovalevskaya's intense concentration is shown as well by her remarkable memory of the wallpaper substitute with which the nursery walls were covered, i.e., "the lithographed lectures of Professor

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Ostrogradsky on differential and integral calculus" (Stillman, p. 122). Years later, in private lessons, her teacher expressed amazement at her speed in learning certain concepts, and she reflected that "the concept of limit appeared to me as an old friend" (Stillman, p. 123). What for the rest of her household members had been rendered background, Kovalevskaya's mind had foregrounded and intensely studied. Analogously, John Ruskin tells us how at an even earlier stage in his life he intensely studied the pattern of the carpet in his nursery.

One final example shows not only Kovalevskaya's steadiness of application and her ability to concentrate, but also her passionate intensity. Because she so wanted to please Dostoevsky, who was courting her sister during their stay in Petersburg in 1865, she spent "untold hours of labor" (Stillman, p. 190) to learn to play Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique,* Dostoevsky's favorite musical work. The effort expended in learning to play the sonata counted as nothing to a passionate adolescent who wanted to please a man of great genius. Her exclusive concentration on playing well for Dostoevsky, followed by her devastated realization that he at some point left the room where she played to speak passionately of love to Anyuta, issues in a very fine meditation on the nature of suffering.

In his penetrating essay, "Some Principles of Autobiography," William Howarth goes beyond Roy Pascal in providing a fruitful approach to a work such as Kovalevskaya's. Howarth preaches against the sin of analysis which fastens on the "ideology or profession" of the autobiographer and chastizes critics who then grade the work "like so many vocational counselors."[11] Howarth suggests an alternate method of analyzing autobiography, one which takes into account the purposes and technique of the individual autobiographer. Howarth finds three approaches to autobiography: autobiography as oratory, autobiography as drama, and autobiography as poetry.

The autobiographies of most scientists are oratorical. The overriding characteristics are quite undeniable:

> The theme is vocation, the special summons that guided an entire life's work and now its story. Work made the story, story remakes the work: they justify each other by reducing all complexities to a single substance. . . . Unity is the orators' common theme, and it springs from a common source: their belief in a superior force—God, History, Nature—that controls their entire careers. (Howarth, pp. 94–95)

But the autobiographer whose achievements are outstanding in his/her field of endeavor and whose entire life has been dedicated to work or

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to a cause, does not necessarily write the most interesting autobiography, nor the one with the most appealing, and distinctively literary, characteristics.

Howarth believes that his third category, autobiography as poetry, contains the most excellent examples of autobiography. The four salient characteristics of poetic autobiographies are 1) the unusual and varied language resources available to their authors, including use of poetic devices and a "passion" for description; 2) a stable central persona who separates "into narrator-protagonist roles only in the story's final stages"; 3) an ironic tone; and 4) an unclear structure, one which may as well be supplied by the reader as by the author (Howarth, pp. 111-112).

Each of the characteristics can be discerned in Kovalevskaya's memoir. External evidence attests that Kovalevskaya was a writer. She wrote newspaper theatre reviews, science reports, collaborative dramas, a reminiscence of a meeting with George Eliot, journalistic articles, a novel, and a small amount of poetry. Kovalevskaya defended her simultaneous work in mathematics and literature by observing that:

> One of the foremost mathematicians of our century says very justly that it is impossible to be a mathematician without also being a poet in spirit. . . . It seems to me that the poet must see what others do not see, must see more deeply than other people. And the mathematician must do the same. (Stillman, p. 35)

This view, in fact, agreed with that of her mentor, Weierstrass.

The internal evidence offered by the text of her autobiography supports this view of Kovalevskaya as a poetic autobiographer. She, too, like Thoreau and Howarth's other representative writers in this category, shows herself fond of, and skillful at, description. She is able to write an extended metaphor, such as her discussion of how nihilism flowed to Palibino, and has a deft touch at small brush stroke work, such as her brief description of the awkward "stork," the priest's son who discusses nihilism with Anyuta. She is able to subordinate description to larger dramatic and thematic purposes as well, as is shown by her description of Dostoevsky, uncomfortable in his tailcoat at her Petersburg aunts' home, and the contrasting description of the young officer Kosich, so handsome, so self-assured and so dashing a figure at the same party, the sight of whom almost transported Dostoevsky into a jealous "frenzy."

Imagery of light and darkness runs through Kovalevskaya's account. Her earliest memories include a fear of darkness or, rather (and

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she insists on this distinction), the "oncoming" of darkness. She describes its course:

> It usually happened if I was alone in a room when twilight was coming down. I would be playing busily with my toys, thinking of nothing in particular. Suddenly I would look around and spy a sharp black strip of shadow in back of me, crawling out from under the bed or out of the corner. The sensation that came over me then was as though some alien thing had crept into the room, unseen. And because of the presence of this new, unknown thing, my heart would constrict. (Stillman, p. 57)

The modernity of this powerful image resides in its amorphousness, its creation by the mind interacting with reality. It echoes in the twentieth century in such work as the "edge of the clearing"[12] poems by Robert Frost, especially "Desert Places." What Kovalevskaya characterizes as her morbidity, or neuroticism, can be seen as an extraordinary fear of disorder, the latent meaning of the "visionary dreariness" in her personal "spots of time."[13] The "wax doll with a broken black eye dangling out of its head" which is thrust in her face brings her "to the verge of convulsions" (Stillman, p. 58); the sight of the exposed thief, Marya Vasilievna, "white as linen," asking forgiveness of another servant wrongly blamed for the thievery and then falling into a type of epileptic fit, will later make young Sofya run from "her white face with its great, dark eyes" (p. 75); the sound of the wolves howling on the frozen lake at night, in "chorus so strange, so inhumanly dismal that our hearts stood still" (p. 96) makes the three children hurry "back inside to the snug, warm room" of damask furniture, heavy green plants, and candle light from a crystal chandelier.

Variations are played on the image of darkness. When Kovalevskaya was about twelve, she sometimes had to go to her father in his study to get her punishment for being caught reading in the family library during her recreation time. She "stopped at the threshold in the half darkness" (Stillman, p. 106). She was made to stand ignored in the corner, feeling a sense of rage at the ignominy and unfairness of her punishment. Shortly after her narration of one such episode, the raw material of the early amorphous image of darkness is spun into a fine, precise expression of her emotional privation: "In general, the conviction that I was not loved in my family wound through my memories like a black thread" (p. 108). Darkness, then, is usually disorder, punishment, lack of love.

Earlier, the brilliant chapter on mushroom hunting (Chapter IV–Palibino, pp. 82–97 in Stillman), with its rich sensuous detail and catalogues of

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the forest—its game, its mushroom varieties, its kinds of trees and shrubbery, the kitchen garden of the Old Believer, the furnishings of his hut, the unusual food his table furnished forth to the mushroom hunters—concludes with a sense of magic and the allure of the forest darkness. Kovalevskaya, who has wound a branch of hops about her hair and person, is hailed as a gypsy by her brother. She thinks:

> That day in the forest had awakened in me so many wild, nomadic instincts. I wanted never to have to go home again; I wanted to spend the rest of my life in that lovely, marvelous forest. Such dreams, such fantasies of distant journeys and fabulous adventures teemed inside my head. (Stillman, p. 93)

This image, with its embrace of darkness, seems at odds with the earlier memory of darkness. However, it gains in psychological plausibility if we remember the speaker's sense of the inhospitable emotional climate of her home. She also shows herself capable of inordinate emotional attachments, such as that for Dostoevsky and earlier for her two uncles, which sometimes cannot be requited. Kovalevskaya's fear of disorder and tremendous need to love were perhaps best and most productively united in intellectual work, especially work with the purest kind of abstract symbols. So this experience emerges as a kind of prefiguring of her intellectual odyssey in Europe.

The stability of Kovalevskaya's persona in her autobiography is guaranteed by her sense of being unloved, if by nothing else. However, she is a remarkably good observer of a scene. Her receptivity to sense impressions and her skill at rendering her observations not only make her autobiography readable, but condition us to expect this continuing unity of a simple, observing persona. Her observations of Anyuta, her sister, are especially brilliant. In her sixteenth summer, Anyuta went from an interest in English historical novels, when she headed her own letters Château Palibino, to intense piety fed by Thomas á Kempis, when she was forbearing to servants and siblings alike, to acting as a vocation, precipitated by her daily trilling of French couplets for the leading role in her mother's name day party in September. Kovalevskaya is able to create the illusion that she herself is a simple *tabula rasa* who takes an impress from people and scenes about her. She records her observation of her sister's grief caused by Bulwer-Lytton's novel, first by setting herself in the scene:

> It was a marvelous summer evening, I remember. The sun had already begun to set; the heat of the day had subsided, and the air was extraordinarily clear and pure. The scent of roses and new-mown hay floated in

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through the open windows. The lowing of cows, the bleating of sheep, the voices of the workmen carried from the farm, all the myriad sounds of a pastoral summer evening, but so softened and transformed by distance that their harmonious totality only heightened the sense of quietness and peace. (Stillman, p. 141)

The young Sofya stole away from Miss Smith to see Anyuta in her tower reading and dreaming room, only to find Anyuta sobbing and declaring that there might be no afterlife. Here is the younger sister's response:

my heart literally froze with horror. I was filled from head to toe with reverence for the importance and the profundity of the ideas with which Anyuta was engaged. All the beauty of that summer evening darkened for me suddenly. (Stillman, p. 142)

Young children who are not yet in the mode of thought which Piaget labelled formal operational do not analyze their experience in abstract ways; they react, instinctively, out of what is inside them. Kovalevskaya is able to recapture these lived experiences without the self-conscious labelling and established posture of the older, accomplished adult. In her more primitive memories, those earlier in her childhood, the unity of teller/protagonist is quite close. The feelings she relates are not challenged or weighed or analyzed.

In her last chapter, "Our Friendship with Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky," the separation between narrator and protagonist occurs decisively, as it had not earlier in the book. Within Kovalevskaya's narrative of Dostoevsky's courtship of her sister in Petersburg are woven threads of Kovalevskaya's jealousy of her sister, a sense of shame at the realization that Dostoevsky had manipulated her as a pawn in a courtship game which can be played only by older players, her fine reflections on the nature of suffering, and a most memorable conclusion—the quarreling sisters reconciled and huddled together in their carriage travelling from Petersburg to Palibino. The last lines form a beautiful, benign, and yet naive conclusion to the narrative now finished—and an ironic presage of the life story ahead:

And both of us felt that there was no more estrangement between us, that we were as close as we had been before. A feeling of inexplicable, boundless joy took hold of us both. God! How that life stretching out before us drew us to it, and beckoned us on, and how boundless, mysterious and beautiful it appeared to us on that night! (Stillman, p. 199)

According to Howarth's analysis, irony is another identifying mark of the technique of a poetic autobiographer. Any reader familiar with

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Anyuta's sad future after this episode—her unfulfilled promise as a writer, her non-storybook life with the radical Victor Jaclard, her final ravaging by disease—cannot help but feel a pang at the childlike and innocent sentiments the passage expresses.

The structure, too, is of the sort that Howarth finds in poetic autobiographies. For though the book covers Kovalevskaya's first fifteen years in a roughly chronological way, one still wonders about the order of particular chapters and the inclusion or exclusion of particular material.[14] Precisely what is lacking in Kovalevskaya's autobiography is that undeniable teleological purpose or thrust the reader finds in the life related by an autobiographer whose account spans more chronological time, encompassing adult achievements.

The response of the reader, however, may be an important clue to the structure and the theme of Kovalevskaya's work. One strain of current theory stresses the constitutive role of the reader of a literary work in assenting to the truth of what is written.[15] Kovalevskaya's contemporary readers found truth in her record. Kovalevskaya's friend and biographer, Anna Carlotta Leffler, tells of a dinner party in Paris during their sojourn there in the winter of 1889–90, which included the Norwegian author, Jonas Lie, and Grieg and his wife. Lie, "in high spirits," saluted Kovalevskaya, "not as the great mathematician, nor even as the successful author, but as the little 'Tanja Rajevsky,' whom he said he had learned to love so truly, and for whom he felt so great a sympathy." He was sure he understood her emotional need: "There she stands, with her empty outstretched hands. What does she want? She only wants a friendly hand to give her an orange." (Leffler, p. 147)

Kovalevskaya's twentieth-century readers are as likely as Jonas Lie to find a true record in her account, an account rendered more credible by a narrative voice that is "low-keyed, almost neutral, neither self-justifying nor self-lacerating," and a prose style "notable for extreme simplicity and compression" (Stillman, p. 37). Kovalevskaya begins her account by openly inviting the reader to share in this literary journey of discovery:

> I would like to know whether there is anyone who can pinpoint that precise instant of existence when a clear awareness of his or her own "I" emerged for the first time: the earliest glimmer of conscious life. I cannot do it at all. (Stillman, p. 47)

She acknowledges our importance to the truthfulness of her enterprise.

Her book exhibits one striking structural feature. While the account stresses the interplay of many people—family, nanny and governesses,

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tutors, servants, local clerics, villagers, woodspeople, a "mathematical" uncle and another loved uncle, Petersburg aunts, Dostoevsky—about 40% of her text, Chapters VIII–XI, seems to focus on Anyuta.[16] But this focus may be more apparent than real. For though Kovalevskaya appears to be present simply as an unobtrusive observer, we learn something about her, too, including one emotional reality of great importance:

> I would have gone through fire and water for my sister. But at the same time, in spite of my fierce attachment to her, a grain of envy nestled in the depths of my heart—that special envy we so often, almost unconsciously, harbor for people to whom we feel very close, whom we admire very deeply and would like to emulate in all things. (Stillman, p. 133)

The "grain of envy" may contain an ultimate structural meaning about Kovalevskaya's autobiography. She is influenced by her sister to rebel against the governess, she is partially under her sister's influence when she falls in love with Dostoevsky, but finally she defines herself by the *via negativa,* saying equivalently, "I am not my sister." Part of the reader's response is to accept her for who she is and not as a poor copy of Anyuta.

A Russian Childhood is best seen as a poetic autobiography of childhood, in which the response of the reader is quite important to the author. Here I am combining Howarth's analysis with Pascal's, Howarth supplying the way of understanding Kovalevskaya's technique, and Pascal the way of understanding structure. As Pascal says, "all childhood has much in common" (Pascal, p. 84). This is amply demonstrated by episodes and emotions Kovalevskaya recounts of her early years, i.e., humiliations at the hands of insensitive teachers, feelings of jealousy over and/or rivalry with a sibling. Pascal says further that "the common structure of accounts of childhood is given by its common theme—growing up" (Pascal, p. 84). But growing up also accounts for the uniqueness of the work.

What makes the common episodes remarkable is the response of the individual child, the emergence of the distinct personality, at the provocation of the universal occurrence. Kovalevskaya makes her sensitivity, her acute powers of observation, her emotional naivete, her keen desire for the approbation of others (if only that of an all-wise and sympathetic reader), and her feeling of unworthiness, all poignantly clear. Stillman sees "the unifying theme of the book" to be "the power of varieties of love to shape human personality" (Stillman, p. 38). In

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writing her memoir, Kovalevskaya appears to have taken a survey of her more remote past, some of which for all people is more easily and more vividly recoverable than later occurrences in life, to understand her then present self, not simply vocationally, but in the variety of impulses and thoughts as experienced in the continual flow of time. Kovalevskaya was engaged in an act of self-confrontation and cognition. But she was aware of the audience at her back, her idealized reader, as she looked in the clouded mirror of the past. Stillman repeats Kovalevskaya's account of the origin of the book at Maxim Kovalevsky's Beaulieu villa: "she happened to recount some episodes from her childhood which Kovalevsky and his friends found interesting, and they urged her to write them down" (Stillman, p. 33). Kovalevskaya wanted "an other"—a reader—who would love her and affirm her more purely and less possessively than Kovalevsky, her suitor in the last part of her life, and even more fondly and less objectively than her female friends.

Kovalevskaya appears to me to have made a legitimate authorial decision in writing a book concerned only with her early life. For doing so she had ample Russian literary precedent, including Aksakoff (*A Russian Schoolboy)* and Tolstoy (*Childhood* and *Boyhood*).

Further, Kovalevskaya undertook the work after Anyuta's death, and it is in some sense a tribute to her much loved and admired older sister. Such a tribute is perhaps best made up of reminiscences of childhood, a time when behavior does not carry the long-term, or permanent, painful consequences which it does later.

Finally, as Anna Carlotta Leffler's biography indicates, the later events in Kovalevskaya's life would certainly present problems to the autobiographer. Ira Grushow distinguishes biography from autobiography by one key feature: "Biography is always critical, however sympathetic; autobiography is always apologetic, however revealing."[17] Clearly, one does not write a biography of one's self, nor, Gertrude Stein to the contrary, does one write an autobiography of someone else. Kovalevskaya might have felt that, given her age at the writing of her autobiography, she was not sufficient master of the meaning of the turbulent events in her adult life to give them credible form and literary coherence. That she wanted her whole story told is clear from Anna Carlotta Leffler's explanation of why she undertook to write her friend's biography:

> There were many reasons which made me consider this my special duty; but the chief one was the fact, that Sonya had always entertained a feel-

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ing that she would die young, and that I should outlive her; and over and over again she made me promise to write her biography. (Leffler, p. 1)

That Kovalevskaya might not have been able to write her whole life is understandable from some of the occurrences of her adulthood. In writing a full life, Kovalevskaya's account would need to cover difficult, painful, and perhaps little understood episodes: the six-year gap in her scholarly career after she earned her doctorate under strenuous circumstances, coupled with her rather shabby treatment of her mentor Weierstrass during two years of this period, her husband's suicide in Russia during her sojourn in Paris in 1883, the quality of her relationships in Sweden and her attitude towards her country of employment, the quality of her relationships with men who were potentially or actually romantic interests, the quality of her relationship with her daughter. One major difficulty which Kovalevskaya would have had to confront in any detailed account of her adult life, whether of her personal and professional life, or the latter only, was her attitude towards her work. Leffler claims both as an observer and as a literal transcriber that Kovalevskaya did not find deep and abiding satisfaction in mathematical work (Leffler, pp. 83, 146).

That Kovalevskaya was not inimical to some sketch of herself as a scientist is indicated by the brief sketch she produced in 1890. The sketch is remarkable for its compression, simplicity, and omissions. Kovalevskaya's way of handling personal life is to blandly and lightly touch on it or to omit reference to it altogether. Had Kovalevskaya lived longer, I believe she might have produced a fuller, more penetrating account of her adult life. What we do have of Kovalevskaya's autobiography is a reflection on a childhood past by a mature mathematician. The work succeeds in eliciting our compassion and understanding and in enlarging our sympathies. It presents us a child who later becomes a mathematician. The author knew it and we know it, but the child did not. Hence, we see a scientist, not as a god or a monster-maker, but as a scientist with a human face.

In introductory calculus, an exotic function like the Dirichlet function is treated lightly, if at all, but then reserved for higher level mathematics courses. By analogy with calculus functions, Kovalevskaya's autobiography should not be dismissed or deferred indefinitely because it is not the garden-variety produced by other scientists. Rather it should be recognized for what it is, an "achievement of literary construction."[18]

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NOTES

1. My primary sources for this outline of Kovalevskaya's life are the Introduction in Beatrice Stillman, trans. and ed., *A Russian Childhood,* by Sofya Kovalevskaya (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1978), pp. 1–45; E. T. Bell *Men of Mathematics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1937); Ann Hibner Koblitz, *A Convergence of Lives: Sofia Kovalevskaia: Scientist, Writer, Revolutionary* (Boston: Birkhäuser, 1983); Anna Carlotta Leffler, Duchess of Cajanello, *Sonya Kovalevsky: A Biography,* trans. A. De Furuhjelm and A. M. Clive Bayley (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1895); and Lynn M. Osen, *Women in Mathematics* (Boston: MIT Press, 1974). In addition, I have also read the recent book by Don H. Kennedy, *Little Sparrow: A Portrait of Sophia Kovalevsky* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio Univ. Press, 1983). I have followed Stillman's transliteration of all names of the principals in this paper. Further, all references to the text of Kovalevskaya's autobiography are to Stillman's translation, pp. 47–211 of the book named above.

2. Other firsts include Nadezhda Suslova, "the first woman physician in Russia" (Stillman, p. 8) and Zhanna Evreinova, "the first woman lawyer in Russia" (Stillman, p. 9). Yulya Lermontova, Kovalevskaya's roommate in Heidelberg and Berlin and lifelong friend dating from this period onward, earned a doctorate from Göttingen in chemistry (Stillman, p. 19).

3. When Kovalevskaya's book first appeared, in a translation into Swedish from the Russian in which she had written it, its autobiographical nature was disguised as a novel entitled *From Russian Life: the Rajevski Sisters* (Stillman, p. ix). This was done at the prompting of close friends, who advised her that "in a small community such as ours [i.e., late nineteenth-century Stockholm], it would shock people if a still unknown writer sat down and wrote, without disguise, all the most intimate details of her family life for the benefit of the public" (Leffler, p. 139). The English translations were done in 1895 from the Swedish translation. They are characterized by Stillman as "riddled with errors of the type made notorious in the parodies of Vladimir Nabokov" (Stillman, p. x).

4. Lewis Pyenson, Introd., *Why I Left Canada,* by Leopold Infeld (Montreal: McGill Queen's Univ. Press, 1978), p. 11.

5. Martin Green, "Writing about Science," *College English,* 43 (1981), 577, argues that the nonscientist has a responsibility to be informed about matters of science and technology.

6. See James Olney, ed., *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980), p. 8.

7. Stephen E. Tabachnik, "The Problem of Neglected Literature," *College English,* 43 (1981), 33, argues on behalf of calling "attention to important neglected works."

8. See the accounts of the lives and works of the Marquise du Châtelet, Caroline Herschel, Sophie Germain, and Mary Fairfax Somerville in Lynn M. Osen, *Women in Mathematics* (Boston: MIT Press, 1974).

9. Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960), pp. 119–120.

10. Elizabeth Fennema, "Sex-Related Differences in Mathematics Achievement:

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Where and Why," in Lynn H. Fox et al., eds., *Women and the Mathematical Mystique* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1980), p. 84.

11. William L. Howarth, "Some Principles of Autobiography," in Olney, p. 84.
12. For this concept I am indebted to Dr. Alan Grob, Department of English, Rice University. Grob groups the following as Frost's "edge of the clearing" poems: "Come In," "The Onset," "Desert Places," and "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." He sees Frost, a modern inheritor of Romantic concerns, situated in the universe of twentieth-century science, as "conflicted" in his attitude toward nature, in desiring "both dark and light."
13. "Vicionary dreariness" and "spots of time" are both from William Wordsworth, originally in The Two-Part *Prelude* of 1799. Jonathan Wordsworth observes that in Wordsworth's "very surprising view, it was the painful moments of a happy childhood that had been most formative." See Jonathan Wordsworth, "The Two-Part *Prelude* of 1799," in the Norton Critical Edition of *The Prelude,* ed. by Jonathan Wordsworth, M. H. Abrams, and Stephen Gill (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1979), pp. 573–574. Prescinding from a judgment on Kovalevskaya's fundamental happiness or unhappiness, I am asserting that pain is one individuating principle, and it is surely one way in which "all stand single."
14. See, for example, Stillman's discussion of her placement of the Palibino chapter as Chapter Four, whereas the Russian editor of the 1951 and 1961 Russian editions of Kovalevskaya's collected works, S. Ya. Shtraikh, places the Palibino chapter as Chapter Seven (Stillman, p. xi).
15. See, for example, Barrett J. Mandel, "Full of Life Now," in Olney, pp. 49–72, esp. pp. 56, 58.
16. Mary Mason sees women's autobiographies as having as their distinctive feature "self-realization and self-transcendence through the recognition of another," typically a husband or other important individual male figure. See Mary G. Mason, "The Other Voice: Autobiographies of Woman Writers," in Olney, p. 235. I, however, do not see Kovalevskaya's book as fitting Mason's archetypes.
17. Ira Grushow, "Biography as Literature," *Southern Humanities Review,* 14 (1980), 159.
18. Mandel, p. 58, argues that the reader's pleasure in autobiography is a function of the reader's sense of both the fidelity and the artfulness of the author in recording his/her life.

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MARY KINGSBURY

Congenial Associates: The Biographical Essays of William Osler

The line of physicians as writers extends from Hippocrates to Lewis Thomas. As an occasional participant in the tradition, William Osler wrote in response to professional commitments. He prepared each of the thirteen biographical essays examined for this paper for presentation before audiences as varied as the Johns Hopkins Hospital Historical Club or the Royal College of Physicians, London. For example, Osler took a brief anecdote about an army surgeon, William Beaumont, from a talk he gave at the Army Medical School and developed it into a biographical sketch delivered eight years later before another audience.[1] The subjects of the other essays—some as famous as Sir Thomas Browne, Locke, and Oliver Wendell Holmes; others as unknown as Elisha Bartlett and John Bassett—all practiced (or in the case of Keats apprenticed) as apothocaries or physicians. In writing his biographical essays, Osler converted professional demands into opportunities for combining his enjoyment of book collecting, historical research, and literature with his interest in biography. That the most sought-after physician of his day wrote as much as he did suggests the quality of the man.

For, as one writer notes, "Perhaps less than once in a century does genetic chance produce a person of the caliber of William Osler."[2] Born and educated in Canada, Osler (1849–1919) served on the medical faculties of McGill University and the University of Pennsylvania before his appointment in 1889 to the Chair of Medicine at the new Johns Hopkins Hospital. After playing a major role in revolutionizing medical education, he left the United States in 1905 to become Regius

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Professor of Medicine at Oxford. A great teacher, a prolific writer (the Lewis Thomas of his day), a man with an unusual capacity for friendship, Osler is remembered as the exemplary physician, both a scientist and a humanist in his teaching and practice of medicine.

Harvey Cushing in his Pulitzer Prize–winning biography claimed that Osler's intense interest in medical history and biography began around 1880 in connection with the impending death of Alexis St. Martin, William Beaumont's famous patient. Osler, who used the story of Beaumont and St. Martin when discussing digestion in his physiology course, quizzing his students as to where the famous stomach should be deposited, evidently expected to perform an autopsy after St. Martin's death.[3] Although denied that opportunity, he maintained his interest in the story and later, in 1902, told his version in "William Beaumont, A Pioneer American Physiologist," an address delivered before the Medical Society of St. Louis, Beaumont's final home.[4]

Still later, in 1908, Osler published a volume entitled *An Alabama Student and Other Biographical Essays.* From the title alone, it is evident that he considered the essays to be essentially biographical. He admitted in the Preface to "a lifelong interest in biography as a recreation" claiming that his "strong conviction of its value in education" often prompted him to choose a biographical subject for an address. "Pictures such as these," he concluded, "have but one value to the student—to waken that precious quality of human sympathy which may enable him to appreciate that in the simple annals of such a career as the 'Alabama Student' a life may be as perfect as in a Harvey or a Locke."[5] Following the book's publication, he told a friend that he had been "a bit doubtful about putting those essays together but these are lives *pour encourager les autres.*"[6] What his doubts were is not clear, but the usefulness of the collection as he saw it is.

To his appreciation of biographies as a reader and teacher, he joined his interest as a collector. In fact, he devoted one section of the *Bibliotheca Osleriana* to biographies; a small section, true, nevertheless, the Bibliotheca Biographica contains nearly three hundred items.[7] Moreover, his own penchant for taking a biographical approach to medical history caused him to recognize the value of providing biographical as well as bibliographical information for other entries. In remarks made to members of the Bibliographical Society in 1916, he described John Ferguson's *Bibliotheca Chemica* as "the most useful special bibliography" in his library. What appealed to him, he said, was Ferguson's "combination of biography with bibliography—beside

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the book is a picture of the man sketched by a sympathetic hand."[8] Examples of Osler's attention to biographical details appear throughout the *Bibliotheca;* and if he had lived longer, undoubtedly there would be many more.[9]

But we do have the biographical legacy he left us in *An Alabama Student.* The goal of this paper is to use those essays to evaluate Osler as a biographer. Keeping in mind the *Oxford English Dictionary's* definition of biography as the history of individual lives as a branch of literature and judging him by the biographical standards of his day, how does he measure up?[10] What methods did he use? In practicing the art of biography, how did he resolve the problem of reticence versus revelation? How skillful was he at turning history into literature? Just how effective was he as a biographer?

Knowledge of the standards established by some earlier biographers should aid in answering those questions. Tracing the development of the art of biography, we will encounter several of Osler's most congenial friends in the spirit. Shortly after his son, Revere (descendant of the American patriot), was killed in World War I, the broken-hearted Osler made the following entry in his account book. "He had developed a rare taste in literature and was devoted to all my old friends in the spirit—Plutarch, Montaigne, Browne, Fuller, and above all Izaak Walton—whose 'Lives' he loved."[11] Three of those special friends, Plutarch, Thomas Fuller, and Isaac Walton practiced the biographical arts.

Plutarch well deserves to be called the father of western biography. Osler placed the *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* fourth on his Bed-side Library for Medical Students, after the Bible, Shakespeare, and Montaigne. "I have put down," he advised the students, "a list of ten books which you may make close friends."[12] Because of the prominent place the *Lives* occupied in Osler's literary baggage, it would be surprising if he had escaped Plutarch's artistic influence. Possibly Osler was thinking of Plutarch when, in the letter mentioned above, he justified publishing his biographical essays by explaining they were lives to encourage others. Plutarch confessed in his life of Timoleon that he began writing biographies for the sake of others but continued for his own. "The virtues of these great men serving me," he wrote, "as a sort of looking-glass in which I may see how to adjust and adorn my own life."[13] Much the same spirit prompted Osler's decision to offer to students his lives of great men of the profession.

Plutarch worked within the limits of the biographical sketch, organizing his materials more or less chronologically, then discussing

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his subject's character, his career, and, finally, the circumstances of his death. To the strictly historical content, he added his own ethical reflections and specific details gleaned from memoirs and what one scholar called "anecdote mongers."[14] Plutarch was particularly skillful in using anecdotes to reveal character. Among his other biographical virtues, modern critics credit his techniques for catching the reader's attention. He began his sketches in a variety of ways: a broad generalization to establish his theme, a personal reference, a clever anecdote. Osler, in his introductions, used some of the same techniques.

The word "biography" did not exist in English until well into the seventeenth century. At this stage in biography's evolution stands another of Osler's friends in the spirit, Thomas Fuller, author of the *Worthies of England,* published in 1662. Fuller's use of the term "biographist" is the first biography-related word in English reported by the OED. Osler, writing under his *nom de plume,* Egerton Yorrick Davis, Jr., in "Burrowings of a Bookworm," confessed that "after first finding Fuller, I lived on him for six months; and when hungry or thirsty after the mental labors of the day, I find refreshment in the *Worthies* or in any page of the *Holy and Profane State.*"[15] That devotion continued according to a journal entry made by a friend staying with the Oslers in April of 1916. "W. O. gave his usual morning clinic at the Infirmary and in the evening read aloud parts of Fuller's sermons."[16]

Fuller's fame as a biographer rests on *The Worthies of England,* a kind of gazetteer in which he gathered information about each county's physical features, famous buildings, agricultural and manufactured products. After these details come the Worthies, short biographies of the local princes, prelates, saints, statesmen, judges, soldiers, sailors, and writers; and lists of the gentry and sheriffs. Harold Nicolson considered Fuller "the most insufferable of all bores," deplored his "incessant puns and quips," and regretted the "undue celebrity" accorded him because of "Coleridge's benediction."[17] Even Nicolson, however, admitted that Fuller possessed one biographical virtue; for though "the rules of charity" deterred him from telling the entire truth, what he did tell, he told accurately. On the debit side, he rejected chronology as "a surly little animal" and displayed little gift for portraying character. All in all, the *Worthies* failed to further biographical methods. Osler could find refreshment in Fuller but little to emulate as a biographer.

Now, however, we do encounter a worthy model for Osler the biographer. Izaak Walton, another of Osler's friends in the spirit, produced "the most important biographical works in English literature prior to

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Johnson."[18] Osler's young relative, W. W. Francis, recalled that during his student days at Hopkins, he read Walton's *Lives* to Osler during the latter's nightly ten minute bath ritual.[19]

Walton, in writing his five biographies, revived the practice of quoting from letters and other works, interviewed surviving friends, and included his own recollections of his subjects. He portrayed a character through his actions and "preserved the sense of chronology and growth that distinguishes biography."[20] Moreover, he concerned himself with the literary quality of his biographies—their unity and language. To balance those virtues, however, he was a careless quoter, invented conversations, and left out evidence that might put the lie to the serene saintliness he attributed to his subjects. But for all his faults, Walton "came closer to being a professional biographer than any writer since Plutarch."[21] Osler, for his part, deserves credit for incorporating into his own lives a number of Walton's biographical practices.

To my knowledge, Osler never claimed Johnson as one of his special friends in the spirit; but, as biographers, they shared a common interest in the lives of physicians. Johnson, who revered the healers of suffering humanity, included lives of two of Osler's favorites, Boerhaave and Sydenham, in a series of eight short biographies published in the *Gentleman's Magazine.*[22]

Johnson claimed in *The Rambler* that "there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful."[23] Osler demonstrated much the same conviction by choosing to write about a Bassett and a Bartlett as well as a Harvey and a Holmes. A faithful narrative by Johnsonian standards called for a frankness uncommon in his day. Indeed, he told Boswell that "if a man is to write A Panegyrick, he must keep vices out of sight; but if he professes to write A Life, he must represent it really as it was."[24] Though ahead of his time in that respect, Johnson maintained the tradition that a biography should be useful; portraying the effects of human frailities might perform a cautionary function. Osler, too, valued biography's capacity to instruct, but failed Johnson's truth test; he could hardly bring himself to include unfavorable comments about a subject. It may be that Osler, though a scientist, lacked the true biographer's need to move beyond description to explanation—what Garraty called Johnson's "urge to understand"—and thus failed to appreciate the value to biography of knowing as much as possible about a life.[25]

Osler must have read Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* because in a review that he wrote in 1918, he praised a bibliography of Johnson

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"which shows us, even better than does Boswell, the working ways of the great lexicographer."[26] In the *Life,* however, Osler could observe the working ways of a great biographer who brought together for the first time the chief elements used in modern biographies. From Plutarch, Boswell learned the value of the small fact; no detail was too trivial a pursuit. "I do it chronologically," he explained, "giving year by year his publications . . .; his letters, his conversations, and everything else that I can collect."[27] One reason the *Life* lives is Boswell's ability to synthesize all those details into a moving entity that conveys the drama of a life being acted out right before our eyes. The product of what Harold Nicolson called "the Boswell Formula"[28] represents not just the best biography of the eighteenth century, but the standard against which all subsequent biographies have been judged.

The nineteenth century did little to advance the cause of life writing. As Garraty observed, "An age that invented the verb 'to Bowdlerize' and considered 'leg' an indelicate word could not be expected to excel in biography."[29] Fortunately, not everyone was on the side of reticence. Carlyle, for example, condemned the prevailing prudishness: "How delicate, how decent is English biography, bless its mealy mouth."[30] And, in 1881, Carlyle's biographer, James Anthony Froude, began publishing biographical material on Carlyle and his wife, the frankness of which ignited a truth versus concealment debate that raged for years.

Osler, writing his biographical sketches during the last decade of the 19th century and the first of the 20th, could look back on a lengthy legacy. To determine Osler's indebtedness to his biographical predecessors—Plutarch, Fuller, Walton, Johnson and Boswell—I will discuss first his use of sources, then his style, particularly the way he organized his materials, how he began and ended his sketches, the amount of interpretation he offered, and his willingness to include controversial details.

A biographer's main concern must be the availability of appropriate sources. Osler, influenced perhaps by reading Walton, included excerpts from letters in ten of his thirteen essays. Judged by the strictest standards, not all of those letters can be considered primary sources; some of them he found in published works such as an edition of Keats's letters. At times, Osler did have access to the originals, e.g., those of John Bassett and Elisha Bartlett, or he quoted from letters that he himself received. That he made effective use of letters is demonstrated in the essay on Louis's influence on American medicine.

The French physician, who considered an extended period of study

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essential for a young physician, had urged the father of one of his favorite American students to make it possible for his son to devote several more years to the observation of diseases:

> Think for a moment, sir, of the situation in which we physicians are placed. . . . we must discover the laws on which our profession rests. We must *discover* them and not invent them; for the laws of nature are not to be invented. . . . Who should be a diligent observer of nature for this purpose, if not the son of a physician, who has himself experienced the difficulties of the observation of disease . . . ? You ought—for in my mind it is a duty—you ought to consecrate him for a few years to science. . . . I know very well that every one will not be of the same opinion; but what matters it, if it be yours?—if you look upon a physician, as I do, as holding a sacred office, which demands greater sacrifices than are to be made in any other profession."[31]

Just before his departure from Paris, the young man in question confessed to his father: "I will not attempt to describe to you the agony it gives me to quit Louis. He is my second father. . . . From one upon whom I had no claims . . . I have experienced a care, an affection which I never could dare expect from any but my dear father. . . ."[32] Osler's inclusion of the letters vivifies the essay, giving us a glimpse of the dedication and concern that made Louis, like Osler himself, a beloved teacher.

Osler, in addition to having access to letters, was fortunate that every one of his subjects published. Indeed, if John Bassett's papers had not caught Osler's attention, the Alabama student probably would be forgotten and the title of Osler's collection certainly would be different. Having access to materials is only the first step; Osler also knew how to select the telling quote. From Thomas Dover's *Ancient Physician's Legacy,* he sampled the buccaneer-physician's sharp attacks on the apothecaries: "I never affonted any apothecary, unless in ordering too little Physic. . . . 'tis your Writing-Physician only who has a Title to a Fee."[33] A number of his other subjects provided no less quotable sources. To cite just one example, in his essay on Oliver Wendell Holmes, Osler recalled the controversy stirred by Holmes's attempts to convince his fellows of the contagiousness of puerperal fever and to warn medical students against teachers who though distinguished may be in error. Describing the dependence of students on their instructors, Holmes wrote: "They naturally have faith in their instructors, turning to them for truth, and taking what they may choose to give them; babies in knowledge, not yet able to tell the breast from the bottle, pumping away for the milk of truth at all that offers, were it noth-

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ing better than a professor's shrunken finger."[34] Although Osler, the teacher, could hardly have resisted including that timeless warning, the essays provide ample evidence of his eye for the apt quotation.

But he showed less inclination for including other types of materials used by earlier biographers. For example, among Plutarch's richest sources were the many anecdotes he reported in his *Lives* and among Boswell's best, his own notes recording Johnson's conversations. Walton, we know, succumbed to the biographer's temptation to concoct conversations, a failing not unknown even in modern biographers. The American writer, Catherine Drinker Bowen, in *Biography: The Craft and the Calling* regretted her own use of "fictional devices" in some early biographies.[35]

Osler, on the other hand, invented no conversations. Nor is his style anecdotal if by an anecdote is meant an unpublished story reported by someone other than its subject. Those restrictions aside, I think Alfred Stillé's story about watching Alpine climbers mounting slowly to their destination, while thinking to himself that through "laborious industry" one might "hew his way to fame and fortune" and that "whatever else might win, *improbus labor omnia vincit*" is anecdotal in that it reveals much about Stillé, who made that insight the guide for his teaching and his life.[36] Those familiar with Osler's life will recognize that in repeating Stillé's story, he is promulgating a version of his own "the master word is work" philosophy. The lack of other anecdotal material is understandable. Many of Osler's subjects had been dead for centuries; so, too, any tellers of anecdotes. In the case of those more recently dead, William Pepper for example, Osler must have heard much gossip, but, unlike Plutarch, was not the kind of biographer to make use of it.

The Dover sketch reveals that Osler was less than compulsive about citing his sources. In discussing Dover's attacks on the apothecaries, he described the rejoinders of a surgeon named Bradley and a Daniel Turner "of the College of Physicians" but failed to identify his sources.[37] At other times, however, he went to considerable lengths to do so. In the Locke essay, for example, he acknowledged that until the publication of Fox-Bourne's *Life,* it had not been known that Locke was "at times an active practitioner, and . . . a writer of medical essays."[38] Osler then explained that for the more important facts he had made a careful study of the Locke MSS in the British Museum and in the Record Office. Overall, it seems fair to say that he used a variety of primary and secondary sources, sometimes holding himself to stricter citation standards than at other times.

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Kingsbury

Did Osler share his friend Thomas Fuller's view of chronology as a "surly little animal"? Perhaps. He divided ten of the papers into sections, the number varying from two parts to as many as five. Two of those divided papers—on Keats and Pepper—represent the only strictly chronological papers in the entire collection. In the other eight, he either treated the known facts of a life in a single chronological section before or, in the case of Beaumont, after discussing the subject's contributions to medicine or the arts; or, he organized his materials with minimal concern for chronology.

Osler obviously preferred to work in smaller units, shaping his materials around a number of topics such as the man's scientific contributions, his writings, or his influence on medical practice. In the four-part Beaumont essay, for example, he describes the opportunity presented by Alexis St. Martin's accident, Beaumont's book, the value of his observations, and, in the last section, a chronology of the physiologist. Of the three undivided essays on Dover, Holmes, and Louis not one is arranged along chronological lines.

Osler, it should be noted, wrote eleven of these essays during his busy years in Baltimore and all thirteen of them were prepared to be read at meetings ranging from the informal Johns Hopkins Historical Club to the Royal College of Physicians on the occasion of the Harveian Oration. Those on the speaking circuit know that a paper effective as a speech often proves less so in print. Be that as it may, judged by biographical standards, Osler can be criticized for not adhering to conventional chronological methods and for not synthesizing his materials into a unified whole.

But he can't be faulted for the variety and quality of his introductions; here he shares the tradition of Plutarch and Johnson. For the first three, he used well-chosen quotations from some of his favorite sources: the Bible, Sir Thomas Browne, and Shakespeare. In the Pepper essay, he began with a paraphrase of Matthew Arnold's poem, "Rugby Chapel," in which Arnold contrasted the average man with the strong soul, the helper of mankind. This Osler used, much as Plutarch and Johnson used their introductory generalizations, to establish his theme that Pepper was one of those strong souls.

On other occasions he made a personal reference. "As a boy it was my good fortune to come under the influence of a parish priest of the Gilbert White type."[39] Or like Walton and Fuller who often admitted to being intimidated by their task, he prefaced "Harvey and His Discovery" with a show of concern as to his qualifications for giving the Harveian Oration.

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Osler introduced three essays by setting a scene. In his paper on Louis he developed the historical background up to the early decades of the nineteenth century when Broussais ruled in Paris and the professors "were always talking of Hippocrates, Galen, Celsus . . . as if not a particle had been added to the stock of knowledge since their time." The opening notes of Beethoven's Fifth can almost be heard as you read that "Upon this scene, when Broussais was at the height of his fame, came Louis."[40]

He set a pastoral scene for "Fracastorius." "Upon few pictures in literature do we dwell with greater pleasure than that of Catullus returning to his home near Verona." After describing how Catullus broke into joyful song at the sight of Sirmio, Osler brought on stage another "Bard of Sirmio," Fracastoro. Osler considered Fracastoro's "Syphilis Sive Morbus Gallicus," to be "the most successful medical poem ever written."[41]

Those two essays alone demonstrate Osler's ability to capture an audience. But the introduction to his essay on "A Backwood Physiologist," the story of William Beaumont and Alexis St. Martin, represents a notable achievement. "Come with me for a few minutes on a lovely June day in 1822," he invited his audience before sketching in the historical background and describing the trading post.

> Suddenly from the company's store there is a loud report of a gun. . . . In a few minutes . . . an alert-looking man in the uniform of a U.S. Army surgeon made his way through the crowd, and was at the side of a young French Canadian who had been wounded. . . . The man and the opportunity had met—the outcome is my story of this evening.[42]

Now call it what you will—cliff hanger, page turner or whatever—that is a compelling introduction more than equal to the best of Plutarch and Johnson. It also demonstrates Osler's considerable narrative skills.

Few writers would trade an enticing introduction for an effective ending; to lose readers near the end of an essay still represents a victory of sorts. Strong endings seem more important somehow in essays initially prepared for presentation as speeches, as were these of Osler. Listeners may doze off during the course of an address, but a powerful ending wakes them up and gives them a reason—if only relief—to applaud.

Osler closed nine of his essays with quotations from poetry, the subject's own writings, or, in the case of the Dover essay, from Dover's teacher, Sydenham. The lengthy essays on Browne and Harvey end

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with an exhortation to the audience to learn from the lives and writings of the two great men. Each of those eleven endings provides a coda consonant with the introduction, Osler concluding nearly as well as he began. In contrast, Osler's close for the Louis essay has little to recommend it; it simply ends. And the Fracastorius ending is a definite disappointment compared with the lyrical introduction. After dwelling with pleasure on the picture of Catullus returning to his home and bursting into joyful song, to end, as Osler did, with a bibliographical note strikes me as a bit off-key.

The death scene provided one of the most popular endings in nineteenth century biographies, particularly those of the panegyrical persuasion. Osler rarely described such scenes, but when he chose to, as in the Pepper essay, he succeeded admirably. He began his description of the death of William Pepper, his former colleague and the man who had been one of Philadelphia's most active citizens, by quoting a letter from Pepper's physician in California. "He died at eight in the evening with a copy of *Treasure Island* in his hands. At seven I had left him gazing upon Mount Diabolo." Osler continued: "With such a book as *Treasure Island* in his hand, we can imagine that the great Enchanter of the Pacific had filled his mind with the possibilities of peace and quiet (so long denied him). . . ." He ended the essay with some lines from Stevenson that expressed the spirit and lesson of Pepper's life of service.

> Contend, my soul, for moments and for hours;
> Each is with service pregnant, each reclaimed
> Is as a Kingdom conquered, where to reign.[43]

The generous tone typifies Osler's habit of speaking well of his fellows —even the strong-souled Pepper. For, according to Cushing, "the two men . . . were the antipodes of each other, and a community in which Pepper held sway could not possibly hold Osler long."[44] That aside, let me recommend yet another Oslerian death scene triumph—the death of Michael Servetus with which Osler introduced an essay included in *A Way of Life*.[45]

Osler, for the most part, conformed to the panegyrical mold popular in the nineteenth century. In all but two sketches, his tone remained positively laudatory. He did call Dover a great hater, but it seems clear that he felt ambivalent about Sydenham's student. In fact, one wonders if Osler, himself a lover of the sea, didn't envy the old bucaneer his part in the discovery of "Robinson Crusoe," Alexander Selkirk. In the Pepper sketch, he nearly condemned Pepper by refusing to criti-

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cize him. "His faults? I am not here either to portray or defend them. . . . He was human, and to those of a man he added the failings of a college president."[46] Though he may have shared Samuel Johnson's conviction that lessons can be learned from a less than perfect life, in his own biographical practice Osler much preferred to describe virtues but to ignore vices.

The argument about the ethics of such an approach to life writing persists even to our own day but certainly not at the heated level it reached in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Edmund Gosse, a leading advocate for reform in life writing, attacked Victorian biography as being overly mindful of the feelings of relatives and friends of the subject. "We in England," he wrote, "bury our dead under the monstrous catafalque of two volumes (crown octavo), and go forth refreshed, as those who have performed a rite which is not in itself beautiful, perhaps, but inevitable and eminently decent."[47] We know from the Cushing biography and a note in the *Bibliotheca* that Osler had corresponded with Gosse in the spring of 1908, the year *An Alabama Student* was published.[48] Not surprisingly, Osler owned Gosse's biography of Sir Thomas Browne, a life that portrayed Osler's hero as being responsible for the unhappy outcome of a witchcraft trial. So he must have been aware of Gosse's stand against Victorian biographical conventions. But we have some evidence that Osler probably did not side with Gosse.

In two specific instances, Osler revealed himself as the quintessential Victorian biographer, the very type Gosse condemned. The first is in the essay on Elisha Bartlett. After describing Bartlett as possessing a "warm, affectionate nature—a manhood fused with female grace" and saying that judging from his contemporaries, "to know Bartlett was to love him," Osler quoted a letter of sympathy that Bartlett sent to one of his dearest friends whose wife had died. What is significant is that Osler offers an apology for including it. "Among the letters is one of sympathy to Dr. Green, the desire of whose eyes had been taken away at a stroke. In it Bartlett unlocked his heart in a most touching and human appeal to the afflicted soul. It seems almost too sacred to quote, but after listening you will forgive me. . . ." He then reproduced a letter that conveys, more effectively than any of his own words, the nobility of Bartlett's character. Questioning whether his own comparatively serene life qualified him to offer solace to one "whose meridian sun has been shrouded in such utter and dreadful eclipse," Bartlett continued, "But why should I not? Am I not a brother and a man?"[49] Plutarch never would have apologized for including a letter that so

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perfectly reveals its writer. But then, Plutarch did not write in the nineteenth century.

That Osler saw both sides of the ethics question seems apparent from a telling statement in the essay on Keats. He described the effect of the poet's love affair with Fanny Brawne, "through her came no peace to his soul," and then stated:

> The publication of Keats' letters to Fanny Brawne can be justified; it must also be regretted. While there are some letters which we should be loath to miss, there are others the publication of which has wronged his memory. Whether of a young poet as Keats, or of an old philosopher as Swift, such maudlin cooings and despairing wails should be ruled out of court with the writings of paranoiacs.[50]

Thus Osler, by rejecting such emotional outpourings, put himself on record as a biographer who believed it better to sacrifice some truth for discretion. We can only speculate as to what other aspects of life he would be reluctant to discuss. We know that he was not squeamish in his medical writings. For instance, in the Syphilis chapter of his classic textbook, *The Principles and Practice of Medicine,* he deplored the "public sentiment . . . in Anglo-Saxon communities" that opposed the licensing and inspection of prostitutes.[51]

Osler made practically no attempt to interpret the lives of his subjects. To describe Pepper as possessing the "failings" of a college president is, in effect, to explain very little about the man. Nor can Osler's failure be excused by claiming that he wrote his biographical essays before Freud's influence began to modify life writing. One has only to read Plutarch, Johnson and Boswell to realize that efforts to move beyond the description of actions to an analysis of their motivation did not begin with post-Freudian biographers.

Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams* in November, 1899, but the first English translation did not appear until 1913, the single edition listed in the *Bibliotheca.*[52] Had Osler read the German edition? If not, what prompted him to begin recording his dreams? For, as early as March, 1911, he wrote Cushing, "I have been studying my dreams lately & have come to the conclusion that just one third of my time is spent in an asylum—or should be!" He evidently awakened each morning with graphic recall of his dreams and left a notebook filled with observations about them.[53] Osler's interest in Freud continued; his edition of the *Interpretation of Dreams* was found to contain some clippings including a *Lancet* article dated 16 June 1917 on Freud's psychology of the unconscious. Despite this evidence of interest in his

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own inner life, something—perhaps gentlemanly reserve—restrained him from a similar curiosity about others. For whatever reason, by not attempting to explain motives or behavior, he followed nineteenth-century biographical practices. To insist upon interpretation, in fact, is to impose twentieth-century standards that did not prevail until after Osler's death.

To say that Osler did not interpret is not to claim that he refused to judge. He showed no reluctance to express his opinion about the writings of his subjects. Moreover, when out of his own field, in the essays on Keats and Locke for example, he brought in the opinions of qualified critics. In practice, therefore, he demonstrated a willingness to judge the man's work, but not the man himself.

Osler, for the most part then, reflected the reticence common among nineteenth-century biographers, preferring to paint the sunshine rather than the shadows of a life. Aside from that personal reserve, he clearly possessed the literary and historical skills necessary to meet the highest biographical standards. That he fell short is due to his failure, in most of the essays, to resolve the imbalance between their historical and biographical content; what resulted succeeds more as history than as biography.

Finally, the reprise. My title, "Congenial Associates," applies not only to the famous biographers who were Osler's special friends in the spirit, but also to most of the subjects he chose for his biographical sketches. Pepper and Stillé he knew personally. As a young man, he had attended an anatomy lecture by Holmes, later heard him speak, and still later received a letter from the Autocrat.[54] Holmes is just one of several who appear to be the sort of men Osler would have enjoyed as friends. Browne, of course, was his truest friend in the spirit. And, if birds of a feather do flock together, Bartlett and Osler would have made a congenial pair. Like Osler, Bartlett "carried sunshine wherever he went." Like Osler, he was a teacher who wrote a text that went through several editions. Bartlett translated *The Lives of Eminent French Physicians* "to awaken in the younger members of the medical body a more devoted and worthy emulation of the great masters of our art."[55] That didactic objective matched almost exactly Osler's appeal to readers of *An Alabama Student* "to take as their models the great men of the profession of their own country." His essays may not epitomize the art of biography, but they are well worth reading as examples of the kind of congenial associates Osler offered as models to members of his beloved profession.

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Kingsbury

NOTES

1. William Osler, "The Army Surgeon," *Medical News,* 64 (1894), 318–322, reprinted in William Osler, *Aequanimitas* (Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son, 1904); and "Beaumont, A Pioneer American Physiologist," *JAMA,* 36(1902), 1223–1231, reprinted in William Osler, *An Alabama Student and Other Biographical Essays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1908).
2. Richard L. Golden, "Medallic Tributes to Sir William Osler and Their Historical Associations," *JAMA,* 242 (1979), 2862–2867.
3. Harvey Cushing, *The Life of Sir William Osler,* 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), 1:177–179.
4. Osler, "Beaumont, A Pioneer American Physiologist." Beaumont, an army surgeon, cared for St. Martin after the latter was shot in the side in 1822. Beaumont's reports of his observations resulted in important contributions to the physiology of digestion.
5. "Preface" to Osler, *Alabama Student.*
6. William Osler to F. C. Shattuck, 18 October 1908, quoted in Cushing, *Osler,* 2:140.
7. "Bibliotheca Biographica" in *Bibliotheca Osleriana* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1969), pp. 566–586. The *Bibliotheca Osleriana* is a bibliography of Osler's personal collection of nearly eight thousand books and manuscripts dealing with the history of medicine and science. The collection is in the Osler Library at McGill University, Montreal.
8. Cushing, *Osler,* 2:419.
9. *Bibliotheca Osleriana,* pp. 63–64 and 112.
10. Volume I of the OED covering A and B was published in 1888 by the Clarendon Press at Oxford University. Osler could have read the OED's definition of biography before writing his essays.
11. Cushing, *Osler,* 2:578.
12. Osler, *Aequanimitas,* following last numbered page.
13. Cushing, *Osler,* 2:140; Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* (New York: Modern Library, n.d.), p. 293.
14. Frank W. Walbank, "Plutarch," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica Macropaedia* 19 vols. (15th ed. 1979), 14:578. Other helpful authorities include Donald Bond, "Biography," *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* 23 vols. (14th ed., 1967), 3:636–641; John A. Garraty, *The Nature of Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957); A. O. J. Cockshut, *Truth to Life: The Art of Biography in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974); Paul Murray Kendall, *The Art of Biography* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965); Kendall, "Biographical Literature," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica Macropaedia,* 2:1006–1014; and Harold Nicolson, *The Development of English Biography* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1927).
15. Cushing, *Osler,* 1:580.
16. Ibid., 2:526.
17. Nicolson, *English Biography,* pp. 50–51.
18. Ibid., p. 69.
19. Cushing, *Osler,* 1:549.
20. Garraty, *Nature of Biography,* p. 74.
21. Ibid., p. 75.

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22. Walter Jackson Bate, *Samuel Johnson* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), pp. 219–220; Samuel Johnson, "Herman Boerhaave," *Gentleman's Magazine,* 9(1739), 37–38, 72–73, 114–116, and 172–176 and "Thomas Sydenham," *Gentleman's Magazine,* 12(1742), 633–635.
23. Number 60 of *The Rambler* in Samuel Johnson, *Essays from the Rambler, Adventurer, and Idler,* ed. W. J. Bate (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 109.
24. Boswell, *Life of Johnson,* ed. R. W. Chapman, cor. J. D. Fleeman (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 840.
25. Garraty, *Nature of Biography,* pp. 88–89.
26. Cushing, *Osler,* 2:592.
27. Quoted in Garraty, *Nature of Biography,* p. 94.
28. Nicolson, *English Biography,* p. 107.
29. Garraty, *Nature of Biography,* p. 99.
30. Thomas Carlyle, "Sir Walter Scott," (1838), *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays* (New York: John B. Alden, Publisher, 1885), p. 38.
31. Osler, *Alabama Student,* pp. 201–202.
32. Ibid., p. 202.
33. Ibid., pp. 33.
34. Ibid., p. 64.
35. Catherine Drinker Bowen, *Biography: The Craft and the Calling* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), p. 97.
36. Osler, *Alabama Student,* p. 246.
37. Ibid., pp. 33–34.
38. Ibid., pp. 68–69.
39. Ibid., p. 248.
40. Ibid., p. 190.
41. Ibid., p. 278.
42. Ibid., pp. 159–160.
43. Ibid., p. 231.
44. Cushing, *Osler,* 1:285.
45. William Osler, "Michael Servetus" in *A Way of Life and Selected Writings of Sir William Osler* (New York: Dover Publications, 1951), pp. 100–125.
46. Osler, *Alabama Student,* p. 227.
47. Quoted in Garraty, *Nature of Biography,* p. 107.
48. Cushing, *Osler,* 2:121; *Bibliotheca Osleriana,* p. 394, #4361; p. 410, #4546; p. 412, #4564.
49. Osler, *Alabama Student,* pp. 143–145.
50. Ibid., p. 50.
51. William Osler, *The Principles and Practice of Medicine* (Edinburgh and London: Young J. Pentland, 1901), p. 252.
52. Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* (New York: Basic Books, 1961), p. 234. Jones explains that *Interpretation of Dreams* was actually published on 4 November 1899, but the publisher elected to put the date 1900 on the title page. *Bibliotheca Osleriana,* p. 242, #2680.
53. Cushing, *Osler,* 2:269; Charles G. Roland, "Sir William Osler's Dreams and Nightmares," *Bull. Hist. Med.,* 1980, 54:418–446.
54. Cushing, *Osler,* 1:153 and 206; Osler, *Alabama Student,* p. 65.
55. Osler, *Alabama Student,* pp. 114, 130, and 146.

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MARNIE JONES

Telling His Own Story: Henry James's *William Wetmore Story*

Shortly after finishing Henry James's biography of the sculptor William Story, Henry Adams wrote to congratulate James. But the letter contains a curious compliment. While writing *The Education of Henry Adams,* he wrote to James to say that he felt as though *he* had written the Story biography, but that "you have written not Story's life, but your own and mine,—pure autobiography," in fact, the autobiography of their generation. The book, he thought, was "the more keen for what is beneath, implied, intelligible only to me, and a half a dozen other people still living . . . you strip us, gently and kindly, like a surgeon, and I feel your knife in my ribs."[1] This seems an oddly personal reaction to what is surely one of James's most convoluted works. What could Adams have meant? Can he help us decipher Henry James as a biographer? I think so, but we need to look beyond the James-Adams correspondence for the answer. For, as Leon Edel has pointed out, biographers have always hesitated to talk about what motivates them.[2] This may be all the more true for James, who, as Edel knows so well, is often difficult to pin down—and that is as true for his correspondence as for his fiction. In responding to Adams's compliment James was rather cagey, but did acknowledge "there is (yes, I can see!) a kind of *inevitableness* in my having made you squirm—or whatever is the proper name for the sensation engendered in you!"[3]

Was Adams right? Is *William Wetmore Story and His Friends* something other than it seems—a rather long-winded and unsuccessful biography in the nineteenth century "lives and letters" tradition? Is it, in fact, autobiography, not biography? If so, how could William

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Story's life provide James with the opportunity to tell Adams's story, much less his own? And more importantly, why would James make this shift?

James's progress on the biography, and, even more importantly, his lack of progress, helps account for *William Wetmore Story and His Friends.* As he explains in that letter to Adams, Story's family "absolutely *thrust* the job upon me five, six, *seven* years ago—and I have been but dodging and delaying in despair at the meagreness of the material."[4] Almost two years earlier, before he had come to terms with his material, James wrote to William Dean Howells in exasperation. The family, he said, had "gouged out" of him the "promise first to 'look at' the late W.W.S's papers and then to write a memorial volume of some sort about him."

> But there is no *subject*—there is nothing in the man himself to write about. There is nothing for me but to do a *tour de force,* or try to—leave poor dear W.W.S. *out,* practically and make a little volume on the old Roman, Americo-Roman, Hawthornesque and other bygone days, that the intending and extending, tourist will, in his millions, buy. But pray for me *you,* over this—to do all that and Please the Family too! Fortunately the Family is almost cynically indulgent—[5]

James does manage a *"tour de force"*—he keeps William Story *"out"* of his own biography. Whether Howells ever prayed for his friend we will never know, but Henry James finally found a way out of his difficulty. He had to "(very artfully and ingeniously) invent a way, a *biais* for doing anything with him. . . . it's all about (in its own fashion) Rome—all about Italy. (It isn't even all—but I make it as much so as I can.)"[6]

James's correspondence provides further insight into this biography and its biographer's difficulties. About the time James was struggling with his subjectless subject he received a request from Houghton Mifflin to do a biography of James Lowell for the *English Men of Letters Series.* James had published for them some twenty-three years earlier the slim *Hawthorne* and he took some time in deciding how to respond to this new request. His answer provides important insight into his thoughts on the Story project. For William Wetmore Story, he said, had taught him a lesson:

> I have taken to my heart a warning, in respect to biography without a real Biographic subject, from my actual difficult job of trying to treat W. W. Story as one. . . . But the subject, owing to its intrinsic slightness, has been all to make by a system of importation of help-

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ful material *into* it, by a system, as it were, of manufactured interest which has really required a diabolical art.

James explained that he didn't mean to compare Lowell with Story, for Lowell had led an interesting intellectual life. The implication, clearly, is that James thought Story had not. "I am more than ever struck," concluded James "with the fact that the interest of biographic work must depend on intrinsic richness of matter. If a man has had a quiet life, but a great mind, one may do something with him; as one may also do something with him even if he has had a small mind and great adventures. But when he has had neither adventures *nor* intellectual, spiritual, or whatever inward, history, then one's case is hard."[7]

The case with Story was a hard one for James, so he replaced his own inward history for that of Story. For to make it as much about Italy as he can, is to emphasize William Story's decision to leave America for Europe; clearly, a decision that parallels or prefigures James's own decision. Born a generation earlier than his biographer, into an old Boston family, William Wetmore Story left America for Rome—to pursue a career as an artist. James sees in Story's life the fictional idea that fascinated him: the case of the "artistic temperament," as he puts it in *Roderick Hudson,* in exile. But this seems to be James's story rather than the sculptor's; throughout the biography James is able to indulge in his own reminiscences, rather more frequently than he does in his subject's.

Of course, writing about Rome, even writing about artistic expatriation, need not result in autobiography. But the story behind James's own autobiography reveals an impulse to move from biography to autobiography. After William James's death Henry planned to write a short memoir about him, but what eventually emerged was the extended autobiography *A Small Boy and Others.* William James appears, of course, but the story is Henry's, not William's. Henry James sat down to write biography, but the result was autobiography. He tried again. In *Notes of a Son and Brother* there is much of traditional biography; we are given family correspondence and portraits of William and Henry Sr. But even in this volume James focuses on himself at the end. This is hardly a criticism, but it does reveal that James found the distinction between biography and autobiography hard to maintain.

Now, one might argue that it is one thing to vacillate between biography and autobiography when the subject is your own family, but it is quite another to do so when the subject (as in William Story) is only an

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acquaintance. James travelled in the same circles in Rome as William Wetmore Story, but they never became intimate. For James, it seems, did not respect Story as an artist. He thought his sculpture was awful and his poetry worse, and the biography itself barely suppresses those judgments. When writing to friends who praised the Story biography, James rarely writes Story's name or his initials without the adjective "poor" before them. Some twenty-five years earlier, while Story was still living, James was more brutal. He wrote to Charles Eliot Norton, a friend of Story's, "So you're acquainted with Story's Muse—that brazen hussy—to put it plainly. I have rarely seen such a case of *prosperous* pretention as Story. His cleverness is great, the world's good-nature to him is greater."[8]

Apparently Story irritated because James could see his pretention, but the world could not. And it must be said that James's assessment of Story was not universally shared. After all, Robert Browning was one of Story's closest friends; Story consoled him on the day of Elizabeth Barrett's death. James Lowell, C. E. Norton, Charles Sumner, and Elizabeth Gaskell all spoke warmly of Story and visited him often. But James was not, it seems, alone in his dislike of Story. William Dean Howells, who "met Story two or three times in his later life, and liked him," wrote that "when I was in Rome (1864!) 'good' Americans spoke ill of him because of his supposed preference for the Englishry, one of whom was said to have said, 'If you don't want to be bored by Americans, you must go to Story's studio: he cuts his own countrymen'."[9] If his material was meagre but he had been motivated by friendship, James's case would have been somewhat less "hard." For James had not only to expand his material but also to suppress his personal feelings. Telling his own story may have seemed the only way out.

James's only other venture into the "diabolical art" of biography reveals something of the impulse to blend autobiography and biography also. For what is James's famous observation in *Hawthorne* about America having no Epsom nor Ascot, no Eton nor Harrow but a simultaneous account of Hawthorne's uncultured environs and an explanation of James's own literary, as well as literal, expatriation? In fact, that Jamesian manifesto is so often used to account for James's career that people rarely seem to remember that James was writing about Nathanial Hawthorne. *William Wetmore Story* provides James with an even greater opportunity—the chance to tell *his* story along with his subject's. In depicting William Story's decision to leave the known comforts of home in 1848 for the life of an artist abroad, James argues explicitly that Story, as a precursor of later artists—in other

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words, a precursor for James himself. He presents a William Story who realizes, a generation before James could so eloquently argue the point, that America lacked rich enough soil to produce great art. If that seemed to be true in 1879 when James wrote Hawthorne's life, think what it must have seemed in 1848. Not only was there no Epsom, Ascot, Eton or Harrow, no thatched cottages or ivied ruins, but Thoreau had not yet published *Walden,* Emerson had only just written *Representative Men,* and Hawthorne was still hard at work on *The Scarlet Letter.*

Consider James's own fiction and what begins to seem like a characteristic shift from biography to autobiography makes perfect sense. Not that James's novels are particularly autobiographical, but that his fictional fascination with exploring developing consciousnesses—be they Maisie Farange's or Lambert Strether's—is the main impulse of autobiography. When he came to write *A Small Boy and Others* he wrote that he was interested in "identifying the scene of our very first impression—of my very own at least, which I can here best speak for."[10] So, like Dickens's Pip on the marshes, James reaches back to the first moments of awareness. It is only recently and with far less success that biography has tried to do what the novel and autobiography do so well—chart the development of consciousness. It is hardly surprising, then, that Henry James would move towards autobiography, a genre that accommodated his life-long interest.

A close look at the autobiography James would later write suggests that Adams was something of a prophet. For, if *William Wetmore Story* is not autobiography, at the very least its method prefigures James's autobiography. For both the biography and *A Small Boy and Others* are memory pieces. That is hardly surprising in his own autobiography, but as a biographer James quite literally wanders around in Story's past as freely as if it were his own memoir. In his autobiography images of the past—old family homes or a succession of school teachers—trigger his recollections so that he finds it "wonderful . . . the quantity, the intensity of picture recoverable from even the blankest and tenderest state of the little canvas."[11] When writing another man's life, of course, James did not have the trigger of his own child-mind, however tender and blank it may have seemed. How then could memory serve James in writing Story's life?

James's memory—his imaginative memory—was triggered by the standard tools of the biographer. In the book itself James acknowledges that he finds "romance" in the biographer's materials: the jottings, the memoranda, the "snatches of small heart-breaking arithmetic."[12]

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Shortly before finishing the book, James admitted "some of the materials [the family gave] me *are* interesting, and there hangs about the whole thing, after all, that made me succumb (ungraciously!) to pressure."[13] It was Rome that made him succumb. For the Rome that these materials conjures up is a Rome that James was born too late to experience, and he quite clearly envies Story his opportunity. Similarly, when he came to write *A Small Boy* he looked for romance as well and found it in what might seem to us unromantic places. He observes that "the romance of the hour was particularly in what I have called the eccentric note"[14] and "eccentric" we think it, for he is talking of the little bare legs of children.

The romance of the past is clear in both books; he found thinking back a pleasure "strangely mixed"[15] in *A Small Boy,* and it seems to be true for the biography as well. For James isn't simply nostalgic. His envy of Story's opportunity, mingled as it is with professional disparagement, often adds an unpleasant edge to the book, though he tries to counter it by translating that envy to a vicarious living of Story's life. The book isn't exactly autobiography, nor it is biography, but a curious combination of the two. In *William Wetmore Story* Henry James lives William Story's life—to see what he could have made out of it.

Now one might want to object that in some sense any biographer who sympathetically identifies with the subject, as Samuel Johnson advised, lives out the life of his subject. Delving into personal documents, tracing the sequence of events, and the connections between cause and effect require that one does so. But we have come to be more leery of the relations between biographer and subject since Johnson's day. Drawing on his own experience and looking to biographers as different as André Maurois and Laurance Thompson, Leon Edel convincingly argues that the biographer's psyche responds to the subject in more ways than he or she knows. Taking his term from psycho-analysis, Edel cautions that it is difficult to resist the power of "transference"—an empathetic emotional involvement either positive or negative—on the part of the biographer. Such involvement, according to Edel, can harm the art of biography.[16] Edel's own subject—Henry James—further substantiates his claim.

Edel recounts that Mark Schorer's "transference" resulted in Schorer's not being sure what to use in his biography of Sinclair Lewis. In James's case, it seems to have pushed him toward replacing his own life for Story's. This impulse may be more common than we would think. Coleridge was not sure about accuracy in biography, but he was sure about autobiography, in which a man is

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attempting to describe another's character he may be right or he may be wrong—but in one thing he will always succeed, in describing himself."[17] Virginia Woolf apparently agreed. In her important essay, "The New Biography," she noted that in *Some People* Harold Nicolson "is as much the subject of his own irony and observation as [his subject is.] He lies in wait for his own absurdities as artfully as for theirs. Indeed, by the end of the book we realize that the figure which has been most completely and most subtly displayed is that of the author. Each of the supposed subjects holds up in his or her small bright diminishing mirror a different reflection of Harold Nicolson."[18]

Henry James becomes a real presence—quite literally—in Story's life. By the time James's subject has made his way to Rome, James quotes from Mrs. Story's diary to say that when she and her husband were at Grotta Ferrata they " 'were forced to pass through a house and go out upon a little terrace.' " James continues, "we warrant indeed they were, and we pass through the house with them and also go out on the terrace, lingering even longer than they, thinking of many things, having to make an effort, positively, to come back again and overtake them on another occasion" (I, 131). This, it seems to me, is a surprisingly candid observation. Like the stage manager in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town,* James emerges from the wings to comment on the scene for the reader. But unlike Wilder's character, James becomes absorbed with his own thoughts. Readers begin to lose any sense of Story himself as they watch James repeatedly make a concerted effort "positively" to break his own reverie and attend to William Story. Luckily for Story he never had the chance to read the biography, for he would have had more cause than young David Copperfield had for wondering if he "should turn out to be the hero of [his] own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else." Apparently Story's family did not know quite what to make of the memoir. James told Henry Adams "Someone has just written to ask me if the family 'like it,' and I have replied that I think they don't know whether they like it or not! I am glad on the whole they haven't access to *you*."[19]

James used the same technique when he came to write his autobiography. There, leaning against the rails at the corner of Eighteenth Street in New York (as it were), James writes he has "but to close my eyes in order to open them inwardly again, while I lean against the tall brown iron rails and peer through, to a romantic view." He finds "I positively dawdle and gape here—I catch myself in the act."[20] Even with his own life, it seems, he has to pull himself on. For inner thoughts are more interesting than external action. Throughout *A*

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Small Boy, James remembers things that "led the imagination on—or leads in any case my present imagination" on.[21] In *William Wetmore Story* the meagreness of the material repeatedly leads the biographer on—and away from William Story.

A close reading of the biography reveals that James felt that Story's opportunity in old Rome was wasted on him. He admits as much in the book itself, saying that he "like[s] to look over his [Story's] shoulder, not because his judgements are rare—for that, in him, for himself at least, would waste time—but because they are delightedly usual" (I, 96–7). Henry James tries to rectify that waste by allowing his own "rare" sensibility, his highly developed consciousness, to ramble about in Story's world. Repeatedly, James makes a move toward evoking past characters and places only to "positively dawdle and gape," finally making the effort to bring himself "positively" back to the task before him—the account of Story's life. But James calls attention to this temptation so frequently that we need to ask what is going on. His lack of interest in Story can be seen by the fact that the slightest mention of a name or place sets James off on some tangent of his own.

Story's letters, his wife's diary, even the letters *to* Story serve as springboards for James's own thoughts. Consider one example, where a letter to Story triggers a typical reverie from Henry James.

> It would take us too far, unfortunately, to read a little between the lines of the foregoing [letter] and try for a moment to win back vision of the "old" Washington of those years; the Washington of long "before the war," of a political and social order that has passed away, and—as it has occasionally lived again for us in anecdote and echo—of an incomparable *bonhomie* of provincialism. It was the Washington, as we so see it, of an almost paradisiacal ease of intercourse, of an unblushing ignorance of cold conventions, of a winning indifference to imported standards. . . . We must, however, but sigh and pass. (I, 238–9)

In denying himself the privilege of evoking this pre-lapsarian Washington, James reveals his richly ambivalent feelings about the past and his real attitude toward Story. The phrases "unblushing ignorance of cold conventions" and "winning indifference to imported standards" show the extent of his ambivalence. For the adjectives "cold" and "winning" ameliorate the negative judgment implied in being ignorant of and indifferent to European values. While the description of Washington as "an incomparable *bonhomie* of provincialism" sums up in one phrase James's complex attitude to his native land; no American but Henry James would choose a French noun to characterize the

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quintessential nature of American provincialism. Apparently, for James, not only was American culture lacking, the English language did not provide a word which accurately reflected the positive side of American provincialism.

James manages to be more positive about old Rome—for Rome had more to offer than the United States capital—but his attitude to the European past is quite complicated. Names from the past are as likely to trigger Jamesian reveries as jottings, diaries, or letters. And, as James would later attempt when writing *A Small Boy,* he evokes these characters who peopled William Story's world much as a medium evokes the spirits of the dead. In the biography, a Lady William Russell or a Princess Belgiojoso are presented as "ghosts" or "shades"; in his autobiography, it is his own grandmother Catherine Barber who appears in this guise. The Roman ghosts haunt the biographer as he tries to bridge the inviolate gap between present and past by living in William Story's Rome. Writing of Lady William Russell, James evokes her in this way:

> The difficulty is really that she is one of those vivid, represented characters, one of those stamped and finished appearances that tempt the historian (especially if he have memory and imagination always at his heels) only too much and challenge him too far. There are figures we may pass with a look and touch with a finger, feeling any recognition kind and almost any adequate. But there are others whom to pass at all is, as it were, to pass *before* them—on the stairs or out of the room; so that we wait on them a little and hover, and while we thus wait find ourselves again in relation with them; than which any more summary process would be, we seem aware, both a breach of manners and a loss of opportunity. (II, 196)

If ever a historian of lives had memory and imagination tagging at his heels, James was that historian. James hovers and hesitates on his stairs, passing before Lady Russell and a whole host of other ghosts, longing for some slight recognition—recognition that cannot come.

I claim that James's method in his own autobiography follows the pattern set with Story's life, and James's memoirs substantiate my claim. In *A Small Boy* James explains such longing over the past in the same terms.

> I feel that at such a rate I remember too much, and yet this apparitionism is only part of it. To look back at all is to meet the apparitional and to find in its ghostly face the silent stare of an appeal. When I fix it, the hovering shade, whether of person or of place, it fixes me back and

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seems the less lost—not to my consciousness, for that is nothing, but to its own—by my stopping however idly for it.[22]

The ghosts, the appeal, are all the same. Only here he makes clear that the "encounter" makes the past seem "less lost"—not for himself in the present, but for those in the past. James's attention rescues the past from oblivion.

James's placing himself in Story's Rome has curious effects on the biography itself. Most obviously, it distances Story and his concerns from the reader. But we do see the "old manners, old fashions, old standards, old provincialisms, prejudices, innocences" wrapped in an "historic haze" which James says advanced upon him in a "swarm" (I, 257). If James was right and Story did not live a rich inward life, then the opportunity to see what Henry James would have done with Story's opportunity has certain recompenses; we watch as James lovingly considers the intangibles of life—people long dead, and a Rome as lost to him as the days of the Roman empire.

But finally those recompenses seem to be gained at a cost to autobiography as well as biography. James's "retrospective envy" (I, 109) overpowers his presentation of the past. Like the traveller who moves backward in time in science fiction stories, James knows too much to respond to Story's Rome on its own terms. He quotes from Emelyn Story's diary, not to account for their life, but to reveal social change. " 'Early dinner and a long evening in Leigh Hunt's library' " quotes James and then he continues: "—which would seem to mark the shade of change in that matter of manners on which we keep our eye. Who in London, in 1903, makes dinners early in order to make evenings long in any one's library?" (I, 220) And yet the present impinges on the past as well. Although he does linger regretfully over what seems to be a more civilized world, although he does refer to his own time as "feebly modern," James can not be quite satisfied with Story's world either.

James's preoccupation with his own feelings is likely to give readers the uncomfortable sense that history—in all its Papal splendour and ravages of revolution—exists only to trigger the biographer's feelings. Writing, for example, of the effect of the revolutions of 1848 on Rome, the flight of Pope Pius to Gaeta, and the establishment of the Roman Republic, James writes that the Storys' "felicity in this [the political crises] was greater than the comparatively small one with which, in years to come, after alighting, for the first time, at the same threshold, the writer of these lines, though gratefully enough indeed, had to con-

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tent himself." (I, 108) Happily for Story, according to James, he had a ringside seat for the revolution.

The envy which pervades the book often has an odd source. The Storys lived in a "Rome of the old order, the Rome of which the rough hand of history has so grievously deprived the merely modern pilgrim" (I, 93). Throughout, James couches his romance in religious images. As a "merely modern pilgrim" James writes that he "can remember but the last winter before the deluge, and only a portion of that; but it was at this time that, as if foreknowing the great assault to be suffered and the great change to be wrought, the sorceress of the seven hills gathered herself up, for her last appearance, her last performance, as it were, in her far-spreading, far-shining mantle" (I, 93). It is particularly appropriate, of course, for this moment of change to be cast in religious terminology because the Pope's secular power was effectively limited by the revolutions of this time. But aside from this suitability, talk of the "great assault" and the "last performance . . . of a far-spreading, far-shining mantle" leaves us, if not in the depths of doubt, at least in considerable confusion. James's grand language hides the fact that this "deluge," this "great assault," is not religious reformation or social change, but the wave of American expatriates who were—as James chronicles in his fiction—to Americanize Europe.

As the extended excerpts show, *William Wetmore Story* is pure "late" James. He manages even more amazing syntactical contortions in this biography than he does in *Wings of the Dove* or *The Golden Bowl.* Here, the convoluted prose seems to serve the purpose of hiding the author's true feelings of distaste for Story's art and his impulse to switch genres. For James does reveal—if you read him closely—that Story failed as an artist. Like the fictional Rowland Mallet, who sees what Europe does to Roderick Hudson's "sentimental security," James tries to account for what went wrong with Story's art by looking at the price he paid for expatriation. But he must do so quite delicately, so that he does not offend Story's family.

> It becomes interesting, in the light of so distinct an example, to extract from the case—the case of the permanent absentee or exile—the general lesson that may seem to us latent in it. This moral seems to be that somehow, in the long run, Story *paid*—paid for having sought his development even among the circumstances that at the time of his choice appeared not alone the only propitious, but the only possible. It was as if the circumstances on which, to do this, he had turned his back, had found an indirect way to be avenged for the discrimination. Inevitably, indeed, we are not able to say what a lifetime of Boston would have

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made, in him, or would have marred; we can only be sure we should in that case have had to deal with quite a different group of results. (II, 222–3)

James acknowledges that the lesson is a "latent" one. He acknowledges that he is "not able to say what a lifetime of Boston would have made of him." But despite these seeming hesitations and without support from the documents he has to work with, James casts the drama of Story's life in his familiar pattern of American artists having to pay—even when they fail—for their art. And surely, nearing the end of his life James might well have pondered how this "general lesson" applied to his own art.

James manages to be as critical as he is because Story felt defeated at the end of his life as a poet, but his correspondence reveals that he did not think his defeat was linked to his expatriation. James includes Story's frustrations as a poet so that he can make this larger evaluation of Story's failure. While James includes Story's frustrations, he omits a line which must have come quite close to his own feelings. In a letter from Story to Norton which James quotes from in the biography, he chooses not to include the line that "the public . . . will insist to the last considering me as anything but a poetaster, dilettante, and amateur."[23] James may have deleted this because it came too close to his own view of Story.

But James does not leave readers with the suggestion that Story simply would have been better off in Boston. According to James he simply didn't have the concentration, the mental powers, to be an artist. But again, the criticism is veiled behind ornate language:

> It speaks unmistakably of his various ability and facility, the mental agility, the insistence in the direction of the hour, with which his life, his talk, his work and his play ever abounded, that he could keep himself in two such opposed relations at once [Story was at work on a revision of his book on legal contracts], could take hold afresh even while really giving up, and give up even while really taking hold. . . . Of all victims (so far as victim he was) of the famous 'artistic temperament,' he was the least detached from other cares of the mind. His aesthetic sensibility, active as it was, was not a jealous, not an exclusive housemate. His mind begot ideas about everything, opinions, convictions, things that at the moment were passions; which things, in their turn, kept him perpetually at the pitch of communication, expression, discussion. He spent his life in the happy condition of never being without a *subject* (for affirmation, irritation, emphasis, for free development of some sort). . . . a provision for our happiness in general, it may be said, than which fate makes none better (I, 240–1).

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James's prose becomes a sort of code; he appears to be positive about Story, but anyone who knew James could read between the lines and see that James thought Story had no focus and that his passions were both superficial and miscellaneous. Many people have tried to account for the increasing convolution of James's later prose. Perhaps the source of it, in this book at least, was that James was in the unhappy condition (unlike the fortunate Story) of being without a subject.

James turns to greater artists to help create a subject. Robert Browning and James Lowell are given more attention in Story's life than William Story. James recounts the details of 1859, for instance, by quoting at length from Browning's letters to Story. An even odder choice was James's decision to skirt Story's thoughts on the American Civil War in favor of Robert Browning's impressions of the conflict. In fact, Browning looms so large in this biography that a reader cannot help but compare Story to him—and find Story lacking. James implies this comparison when he seems to account sympathetically for Story's failure as a poet: "In few poets not of the first felicity can the love of the lyric, and scarce less of the dramatic, idea have so worked" (II, 170) as it did in Story. If a reader works through the double negatives, Browning, a poet of "the first felicity" comes to mind. James ponders the failure of Story's poetry directly:

> we remain rather puzzled by the failure of the love to cover the whole precarious ground. Story's poetry is prompt and sincere, and has often the happiest moments; yet we feel it not to move *passibus aequis* worth his lively interest in his medium. Of any such treachery, at the same time, he would doubtless himself never have complained. He treated his muse as a consoler, cheerer, beguiler, and would honestly have said, beyond question, that she had done enough for him in letting him live with her. To have had such a connection to cultivate has assuredly been for him, from the first, a partial provision of happiness. (II, 170–1)

After calling Story a "sincere" poet, James undermines this assertion by his characterization of Story's relationship with the muse of that art. Substitute the word woman for the word muse ("she had done enough for him in letting him live with her") and you get a clear sense of the pitiful nature of the relationship James describes. Substitute the word hussy, as James does in his letter to Norton, and you have James's true feelings about Story's pretentions to poetry.

Throughout the biography, James comes quite dangerously close to revealing Story for what he feels him to be. This fascination is so powerful, indeed, that his suppressions actually suppress very little about his true feelings. He may have fooled Mrs. Story, but as we have seen

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he clearly did not fool Henry Adams, who thought that "the essential superficiality of Story and all the rest, you have made painfully clear to us, but not, I think, to the family or the public."[24]

Adams responded so strongly because he felt so strongly, perhaps more than anyone else of his generation, that they all had failed. Adams's legendary pessimism might make one think that he was reading himself rather than James into the biography. Perhaps he was, but James's own correspondence suggests that particularly at the time he was writing this book he felt himself to be a failure. The fact that we now consider James the most important contributor to the development of the modern novel should not blind us to the fact that by the end of his life there were times when Henry James felt he had failed. And his failure could be measured against Story's success: it was a failure of popularity. Turn to James's letters written during this time and his sense of failure emerges. In a letter to H. G. Wells, written some two months before the "end of our business [the Story biography] is in sight," James wrote of future serialization of his own novels: "evidently no fiction of mine can or *will* now be serialized."[25] Considering that serialization added considerably to a novelist's earnings, this realization must have been painful indeed. James admits as much: "what secrets and shames I reveal to you!" James's depression over his popularity and his finances deepened as the world geared up for war. Friends, with Edith Wharton in the lead, tried to collect money for James under the guise of a literary prize, much to his embarrassment. There seems real truth to Adams's insight, which means that James was writing around a more delicate subject than his own dislike of Story: he was confronting his own failure. No wonder he chose to hide it so carefully. When writing of his "shames" to Wells, James admitted "it isn't a thing I would willingly expose to any eye but my own. And even then, sometimes, I shrink!"[26]

James shrank in responding to Henry Adams's letter about *William Wetmore Story,* placing the blame on the art of biography. But despite this feint, James acknowledges a good deal of truth in Adams's perception. James himself substantiates my claim for the autobiographical nature of the work:

> Very curious, and even rather terrible, this so far-reaching action of a little biographical vividness—which did indeed, in a manner, begin with me, myself, even as I put the stuff together—though pushing me to conclusions less grim, as I may call them, than in your case. The truth is that any retraced story of bourgeois lives (lives other than great lives of 'action'—*et encore*!) throws a chill upon the scene, the time, the subject,

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the small mapped-out facts, and if you find 'great men thin' it isn't really so much their fault (and least of all yours) as that the art of the biographer—devilish art!—is somehow practically *thinning.*[27]

Henry James did not have the examples of Edel, Ellmann, Painter, Frank in our own time, but he did have Boswell, Gaskell, and Froude before him. These biographers prove that their art is not inevitably thinning. But James found his material thin, and re-living Story's life didn't seem to thicken it. Ultimately his feelings for his subject and his decision for salvaging his material did not make for good biography. While the book may not have gratified Story's family and quite certainly did not interest the "intending and extending tourists" of his day, *William Wetmore Story* does, in its uneasy combination of biography, autobiography and its author's central fictional concern, provide real insight into James's thoughts on Europe and the price expatriation exacts from art. The curious experience of watching what Henry James could have made of William Story's opportunities may interest students of Henry James, but it should help to alert students of biography to the complexities that lie just beneath the surface of any life. Henry James was, of course, a great imaginative artist, but his combination of biography, autobiography and fictional interests ought to set us looking for complicated imaginative strategies in all biography.

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NOTES

1. "To Henry James," 11 November 1903, *The Letters of Henry Adams,* ed. Worthington Chauncey Ford, II (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938), pp. 414–5.
2. Leon Edel, "Transference: The Biographer's Dilemma," *Biography* 7 (1984): 285.
3. "To Henry Adams," 19 November 1903, *Henry James Letters,* ed. Leon Edel, IV (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984), p. 289.
4. "To Henry Adams," 19 November 1903, *Henry James Letters,* IV, 289.
5. "To William Dean Howells," 25 January 1902, *Henry James Letters,* IV, 224.
6. "To Sarah Butler Wister," 21 December 1902, *Henry James Letters,* IV, 260.
7. "To Houghton, Mifflin and Company," 29 December 1902, *Henry James Letters,* IV, 263.
8. "To Charles Eliot Norton," 31 March [1873], *Henry James Letters,* I, 362.
9. "To Thomas S. Perry," 27 October 1903, *William Dean Howells: Selected Letters,* ed. William C. Fischer and Christopher K. Lohmann, V (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), p. 66.
10. Henry James, *A Small Boy and Others* (New York: Scribners, 1913), p. 8.
11. *A Small Boy,* p. 28.

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12. Henry James, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends: From Letters, Diaries, and Recollections,* 2 vols. (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1903), I, 95. Page numbers in the text refer to this edition.
13. "To Sarah Butler Wister," 21 December 1902, *Henry James Letters,* IV, 260.
14. *A Small Boy,* p. 29.
15. *A Small Boy,* p. 3.
16. Edel, "Transference," p. 284.
17. Kathleen Coburn, ed., *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1957), I, 74.
18. Virginia Woolf, "The New Biography" in *The Collected Essays,* ed. Leonard Woolf, IV (London: Hogarth, 1967), p. 233.
19. "To Henry Adams," 19 November 1903, *Henry James Letters,* IV, 289.
20. *A Small Boy,* pp. 27, 24.
21. *A Small Boy,* p. 13.
22. *A Small Boy,* p. 92.
23. "To Charles Eliot Norton," n.d., Story Papers, The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. Quoted by permission of The Houghton Library.
24. "To Henry James," 11 November 1903, Ford, II, 415.
25. "To H. G. Wells," 15 November 1902, *The Letters of Henry James,* ed. Percy Lubbock (New York: Scribners, 1920) I, 405. This letter does not appear in Edel, *Henry James Letters.*
26. "To H. G. Wells," 15 November 1902, Lubbock, I, 405.
27. "To Henry Adams," 19 November 1903, IV, 289.

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Reviewed Elsewhere

With this issue, *Biography* begins a new section, "Reviewed Elsewhere," devoted to a list of biographies and books about life-writing reviewed in other journals. "Reviewed Elsewhere" hopes to bring students of biography coverage of a more complete group of biographical works than can be presented in the review section. While the review section will continue to present in-depth analysis of new works in the subject, "Reviewed Elsewhere" will attempt to skim what is being published in and around the field of biography.

The first edition of "Reviewed Elsewhere" has been divided into four sections: American Culture and African Literature and Culture, Popular Biography, Foreign Language (French and Spanish), and Women's Studies. In each category the works have been arranged alphabetically by subject. The Contributing Review Editors have either selected quotations from the reviews which reflect the content of the review or paraphrased the contents to reflect the general tenor of the review. The publication information (e.g., dates, places, prices, number of pages) comes from the reviews. As a rule, the editors have included as much information as the journal gives.

This edition of "Reviewed Elsewhere" includes works listed in recent editions of:

The Book Review, The Los Angeles Times
Bulletin Hispanique
Eighteenth-Century Studies
Feminist Review
French Studies
HAHR
Hispania
Journal of American Studies
Legacy
Massachusetts Review
Research in African Literatures
Review of African Literature
Signs
The French Review
The Journal of American History
The New York Review of Books
The New York Times Book Review
The New Yorker
Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature
Women's Studies Review
Women's Review of Books

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This inaugural edition has been prepared by the following Contributing Review Editors who represent scholars from different disciplines, specialties and universities:

Electa Arenal	CSI/City University of New York (Women's Studies)
Zelda Irene Brooks	CSI/City University of New York (Spanish Literature)
Michael Fassiotto	Chaminade University (Popular Biography)
Mark Helbling	University of Hawaii at Manoa (American Culture and African Literature and Culture)

We hope to add others to our review board to make "Reviewed Elsewhere" as extensive as possible. Scholars wishing to join the Contributing Review Editors should select two to five journals they believe should be included on our list and write to:

Marie-José Fassiotto
Review Editor
Biography
University of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Women's Studies
Prepared by Electa Arenal

ANGELOU, MAYA

All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes. Maya Angelou. New York: Random House, 1986. pp. 210. $15.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Deborah E. McDowell. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 1, October 1986, p. 17.

"No genre has captured the Afro-American literary imagination as has autobiography. . . . This volume is the latest of the chronicle which began with the very popular and justly acclaimed *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1970). These volumes cover miles of geographical territory and milestones of personal history, beginning in Stamps, Arkansas with a young girl's battle with Jim Crow (apartheid American style), and ending in Accra, Ghana with a woman's psychic reconciliation with her African past. In between are stops in Rome, Venice, Paris, Yugoslavia, Cairo, Athens and Milan and details of an extraordinary life that includes rape, teenage motherhood, prostitution, interracial marriage, divorce, romances, show business, journalism, political organizing and teaching. No wonder it has taken Angelou five volumes to tell her story so far . . . Personal memory, the staple of autobiography, must be transformed into collective myth and history."

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ASTELL, MARY

The Celebrated Mary Astell, An Early English Feminist. Ruth Perry. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. pp. 398. $45.00 hardcover, $19.95 paper.

Reviewed by Carol Barash. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 5, February 1987, pp. 12–13.

"*The Celebrated Mary Astell* brings a bold eighteenth-century woman back to life. Revealing a cornucopia of new, primary material and a commitment to the history of feminist culture and feminist thought, Ruth Perry shows us both the intellectual force and the day-to-day struggles of the woman who is often called "the first English feminist."

"Perry is especially good at asking questions about Astell's life in ways that Astell would have understood. She shows us the similarities—but also the distance—between Astell's cultural framework and our own. The chapters on Astell's relationships with other women are particularly fine."

DICKINSON, EMILY

Dickinson: Strategies of Limitation. Jane Donahue Eberwein. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985. pp. 308. $25.00.

Reviewed by Alice Hall Petry. *Legacy,* vol. 3, no. 1, Spring 1986, pp. 72–74.

"Eberwein's study is particularly impressive in that the treatment is grounded firmly in biography. That 'plain, shy little person' with the 'childlike' voice whom Higginson immortalized in the posthumous Atlantic tribute was, according to Eberwein, a 5'5" woman who won honors at Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary for a dazzling verbal analysis of Euclidean geometry."

Emily Dickinson and her culture: the soul's society. Barton Levi St. Armand. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984. pp. 320. $29.92.

Emily Dickinson: A Voice of War. Shira Wolosky. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984. pp. 216. $16.50.

Reviewed by Joan Burbick. *Legacy,* vol. 13, no. 1, Spring 1986, pp. 69–77.

"St. Armand falls into the familiar biographical chasm of Dickinson scholarship . . . Dickinson is left trapped in a nineteenth-century sensibility, obsessed with love yet denied and denying its fulfillment . . . Fortunately, this mode of argument gradually fades when St. Armand returns to his discussion of folk and elite traditions in American culture.

"Wolosky finds conflict everpresent in Dickinson's life and art, a conflict with the political voices of her time and the divine voice of God. . . . Basically, this study traverses classical problems of Dickinson scholarship: questions of historical and political context, the incursions of biography, the ambivalence of poetic imagery and meaning, and the status of language."

DUNBAR-NELSON, ALICE

Give Us Each Day: The Diary of Alice Dunbar-Nelson. Edited with a critical introduction and notes by Gloria T. Hull. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1984.

Reviewed by Patsy C. Perry. *Signs,* vol. 12, no. 1, Autumn 1986, pp. 174–176.

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"An important twentieth-century document, it is Dunbar-Nelson's report of her times and her reactions to those times of white male domination in post-World War I America. . . . It presents a view into Dunbar-Nelson's family life, her love for both men and women, her employment, "created" employment, and unemployment, her physical and mental health, her writing, and her attitudes, interests, and leisure activities. . . . Describes from an insider's vantage point, a large network of people, places, organizations, and activities important to the Harlem Renaissance era, one of the richest periods in the literary and cultural history of black Americans."

JACOBS, HARRIET

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written by Herself. Harriet "Linda Brent" Jacobs. Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1861.

Review article by Joanne M. Braxton, "Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: The Re-Definition of the Slave Narrative Genre," *Massachusetts Review,* vol. 27, no. 2, Summer 1986, pp. 379–387.

"I believe, with James Olney, that students of autobiography are themselves vicarious autobiographers, and I know that I read every text through my own experience, as well as that of my mother and grandmothers. As black American women, we . . . have been as invisible to the dominant culture as rain; we have been knowers, but we have not been known . . . *Incidents* is descended both from the autobiographical tradition of the heroic male slaves and a line of American women's writings that attacks racial oppression and sexual exploitation. . . . The inclusion of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* in the slave narrative genre and the autobiographical tradition of black Americans, permits a more balanced view of that genre and that tradition, presenting fresh themes, images, and uses of language . . . occupies a position as central to that tradition as the 1845 *Narrative of Frederick Douglass.*"

KUZWAYO, ELLEN

Call Me Woman. Ellen Kuzwayo. London: The Women's Press, 1985. $5.95.

Reviewed by Elaine Unterhalter. *Feminist Review,* no. 22, Spring 1986, pp. 115–116.

"[R]emarkable . . . for the plain manner of the telling, the great integrity this illuminates, and the unique dimensions apartheid South Africa gives the tale. . . . With graphic details she portrays her time in detention: the fellowship, the boredom, and the fears."

LYNCH, DOROTHEA

Exploding Into Life. Dorothea Lynch and Eugene Richards. New York: Aperture, 1986. pp. 168. $18.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Estelle Disch. *Woman's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 1, October 1986, pp. 6–7.

"*Exploding Into Life* is a compelling and informative book about living with breast cancer. It documents the final years of the life of the journalist Dorothea Lynch in journal entries and photos. The journal entries are Dorothea's, the photos those of Gene Richards, her long-time lover and occasional work partner. Although I have heard many cancer stories in my role as counselor to cancer patients, I learned a lot from this book; I highly recommend it for anyone wanting to read a patient's account of this sad, tiresome, engaging, challenging illness."

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RHYS, JEAN

Jean Rhys. Carole Angier. New York: Viking, 1985. pp. 126. $13.95.

Jean Rhys. Arnold E. Davidson. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1985. pp. 165. $13.95.

Reviewed by Joan Seay. *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature,* vol. 5, no. 2, Fall 1986, pp. 324–326.

"Angier's illusionless but sympathetic portrait, written in language as simple and severely honest as Rhys's own, offers keen insight into the Rhys sensibility as well as an illuminating story of a modern woman artist's life.

"Angier follows Rhys's life through her novels, stories, letters, and the unfinished autobiography, integrating biographical information with a close reading of Rhys's fiction. Although the reading of a life from fiction, even fiction as autobiographical as Rhys's, can lead to conjecture and to speculative conclusions, Angier is a perceptive sleuth in unravelling ties between the literary texts and biographical facts, and her portrait of the author is wholly convincing.

"Davidson is well-informed and well-disposed toward Rhys, but his emphasis on what Rhys says about conventional social values and the accepted social order gives a somewhat distorted view of Rhys and her concerns."

WOOLF, VIRGINIA

Virginia Woolf and London: The Sexual Politics of The City. Susan Merrill Squier. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985. pp. 220. $19.95.

Reviewed by Panthea Reid Broughton, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature,* vol. 5, no. 1, Spring 1986, pp. 126–127.

"Squier finds explicit condemnation of a patriarchal society in all Woolf's treatment of, as Squier subtitles her book, 'The Sexual Politics of the City.' She offers especially good readings of Woolf's autobiographical works, her London essays, of *Night and Day* (and the 'metatextual' glosses therein [pp. 73, 88]), and of *Flush.*"

WORDSWORTH, DOROTHY

Dorothy Wordsworth. Robert Gittings and Jo Manton. New York: The Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1985. pp. 318. $17.95.

Reviewed by Donald E. Hayden, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature,* vol. 5, no. 1, Spring 1986, p. 125.

"More often than not, Dorothy Wordsworth is still considered because of her relationship to her brother William and her friend Coleridge rather than as a significant woman in her own right. Indeed, she herself appears to have preferred it that way. This present biography adds to our understanding of Dorothy Wordsworth as a writer of letters, journals, and a few poems of some distinction. The biographers make excellent use of the new editions of the Wordsworth letters as well as of Dorothy's journals, and other material not yet published."

Group Biographies

Dignity: Lower Income Women Tell of Their Lives and Struggles. Fran Leeper Buss. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1985.

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Reviewed by Sally Meekling, *Women's Studies Review,* vol. 8, no. 4, July/August, 1986, pp. 7–8.

"In it, ten women are given a voice, a voice of discord and weariness that speaks frankly and without illusion of the repressions, the struggles, and the achievements of the 75% of poor people in this country who are women. The use of oral history is a means whereby the everyday lives of people are documented, fleshed out, and exposed. The breadth and potential of oral history as social documentary, history, and literature is only beginning to be recognized. And, certainly women are in the forefront of this renaissance and re-vision. Covers a variety of topics, such as ancestry, childhood, adolescence and menarche, marriage, family and motherhood, work, sexual harassment and rape, and other racial, sexual and economic issues. Buss's treatment is more autobiographical than historical and, in a sense, more akin to literary genre than an historical rendering."

Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain. George Ballard. Edited with an introduction by Ruth Perry. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985. pp. 486. $30.00.

Reviewed by Jeslyn Medoff. *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature,* vol. 5, no. 1, Spring 1986, pp. 127–128.

"In 1752 George Ballard published a collection of biographies of sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth century learned women. Claims for this work as 'a landmark in the history of feminism' and 'an important step in the development of English Biography' (13) are not exaggerated. . . . In addition to supplying the preface, dedications, annotations, and list of subscribers to the original publication, this edition provides a modern introduction, an invaluable annotated bibliography, further annotations translating Latin passages and locating Ballard's sources, and an index. The sixty-two biographies describe a wide range of women. Ruth Perry's introduction provides a biography of Ballard, gleaned from seventy-four volumes of manuscripts and correspondence, which is at least as interesting as any he himself wrote."

Spanish Literature

Prepared by Zelda Irene Brooks

BUENO, LÓPEZ

Poesía. Begoña López Bueno. Letras Hispánicas. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1984. pp. 249.

Reviewed by Daniel L. Heiple. *Hispania,* vol. 69, December 1986, pp. 867–869.

"Begoña López Bueno's edition makes available to a popular audience one of the most interesting minor poets of the seventeenth century. López Bueno's extensive introduction surveys the poet's life, defines the poetic traditions in which he worked, and evaluates with care and subtlety Rioja's creative genius within those traditions. The biography summarizes aptly the archival work done by Jean Coste, outlining the poet's writings, his studies and political career."

CLARÍN

Clarín en su obra ejemplar. Gonzalo Sobejano. Madrid: Castalia, 1985. pp. 206.

Reviewed by Noël M. Valis. *Hispania,* vol. 69, September 1986, pp. 544–545.

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"Clarín en su obra ejemplar, which began as a series of lectures delivered at the Fundación Juan March in 1981, is first of all clearly intended, with its functional overview of Alas's life and work, to initiate the non-specialist in a growing field of investigation and to help the busy Clarín scholar keep up with a mounting bibliography. This last is especially useful and is a vivid illustration of the alarming momentum Clarín criticism (and editions) has acquired in the last twenty years."

DARÍO, RUBÉN

Azul. Prosas profanas. Andrew P. Debicki and Michael J. Doudoroff. Madrid: Alhambra, 1985. pp. 260.

Reviewed by Joseph A. Feustle, Jr. *Hispania,* vol. 69, December 1986, pp. 881–882.

This fine edition of two major works by Rubén Darío is divided as follows: a preliminary study consisting of essays by Debicki and Doudoroff; a list of editions of Darío's works; an extensive selected, partially annotated bibliography; Azul (edited by Doudoroff) and Prosas profanas (edited by Debicki), and a glossary of the names, concepts, and mythological figures so frequently found in Darío's works. The first essay by Debicki is a biographical study called "Ruben Darío: Vida y poesia." The edition is designed to be useful to the specialized critic, to the advanced student, and to the educated reader not otherwise knowledgeable about Darío.

ECHEVERRÍA, ESTEBAN

Esteban Echeverría. Edgar C. Knowlton, Jr. Bryn Mawr, PA: Dorrance and Company, 1986. pp. xvi, 125.

Reviewed by Andres Avellaneda. *HAHR,* November 1986, p. 814.

"Andres Avellaneda points out the usefulness of Edgar Knowlton's book to Social Scientists who need a rapid and efficient orientation. Knowlton's excellent study includes a thorough biography of Esteban Echeverría's life as well as a comprehensive review of Argentine History up to the middle of the 19th Century. In view of the complete lack of full length studies in languages other than Spanish, Knowlton's superb work answers a widely felt need."

HUIDOBRO, VICENTE

Nuevos estudios sobre Huidobro y Larrea. David Bary. Valencia: Pre-Textos, 1984. pp. 182.

Reviewed by Mireya Camurati. *Hispania,* vol. 69, March 1986, pp. 112–113.

"Throughout the text, the author gives us access to important documents, especially the letters which Huidobro sent to Larrea. By means of these letters and the abundant commentaries of Bary it is possible to approach the great figures of Huidobro and Larrea from an optimal perspective."

Vicente Huidobro: The Careers of a Poet. René De Costa. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1984. pp. 186.

Reviewed by Paul W. Borgeson, Jr. *Hispania,* vol. 69, March 1986, pp. 111–112.

"It is biography and criticism, a portrait of both the man and his times, a book popular in style yet still satisfying in its aesthetic analyses and reasoned textual interpretations."

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LOPE DE VEGA

Cartas. Lope de Vega. Introduction and notes by Nicolás Marín. Madrid: Castalia, 1985.

Reviewed by Bruno M. Damiani. *Hispania,* vol. 69, December 1986, pp. 866–867.

"The inner dimension of Lope is revealed through a variety of artistic means, all skillfully used, including dialogue, monologue, and letters. Lope's prolific correspondence provides direct testimony to one of the most intricate and engaging lives of the seventeenth century. His enormous enjoyment of life and equally lively fear of death, his negative attitude to Aristotelian precepts and to the new sort of poetic diction known as *culteranismo,* his conjugal frustration, erotic passion and spiritual fervor are all vividly conveyed in hundreds of letters, written between 1579 and 1635. The present edition, competently prepared by Nicolás Marín examines lucidly and perceptively the personal, social, political, and artistic dimensions of the life of Lope de Vega as revealed in one hundred and fifty letters penned from 1604 to 1633."

LORCA, FEDERICO

Memoria de Granada: Manuel Ángeles Ortiz, Federico García Lorca. Antonina Rodrigo. Barcelona, Plaza y Janés, 1984, 13 × 19.5 cm. pp. 367.

Reviewed by Marie Laffranque. *Bulletin Hispanique,* 1986, pp. 215–218.

In this book Antonina Rodrigo reveals to the public, facts, documents and citations which she found in publications dedicated to Lorca and Ortiz, who were childhood friends.

García Lorca el amigo de Cataluña. Antonina Rodrigo. Barcelona, Edhasa, 1984, 13 × 20 cm. pp. 368.

Reviewed by Marie Laffranque. *Bulletin Hispanique,* pp. 212–214.

Rodrigo bolsters her original book with information subsequently found through interviews and previous publications; she integrates them into her new edition, giving greater insight into Lorca's life and work.

MÁRQUEZ, GARCÍA

Gabriel García Márquez. Raymond L. Williams. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984. pp. 176.

Reviewed by Regina Janes. *Hispania,* vol. 69, March 1986, pp. 117–118.

"In a biographical introduction, Williams sets García Márquez in the context of the Barranquilla group in the 1940s and remarks usefully on the Eurocentrism of that group's reading.

French

PIZAN, CHRISTINE (DE)

Christine de Pizan: Her Life and Works. Charity C. Willard. New York: Persea Books, 1985. 22 illustrations. pp. 266. $19.95

Reviewed by Angus J. Kennedy. *French Studies,* vol. XL, no. 3, July 1986, pp. 315–316.

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"With regard to biographical studies in particular, Professor Willard's handsomely produced book is as timely as it is important: it provides an excellent, up-to-date synthesis for the specialist and at the same time caters in the most engaging yet scholarly manner for the needs of the ever-increasing number of readers coming to the texts for the first time."

SARTRE

Sartre 1905–1980. Annie Cohen-Solal. Paris: Grand Livre du Mois, 1985. pp. 725.

Reviewed by Daniel A. MacLeay. *The French Review,* vol. 60, no. 4, March 1987, pp. 547–548.

"This new biography of Jean-Paul Sartre is an 'authorized' biography intended for the general public. As such, the author received the cooperation of former associates of Sartre, including Robert Gallimard and Simone de Beauvoir . . . Although it is impossible to give a summation of the enormous amount of material presented in the biography, the author spares no effort to include all available material. Her synthesis is impressive and useful. The use of the material to analyze Sartre's character and his works is less auspicious."

Popular Biography

Prepared by Michael Fassiotto

ADAMS, JOHN QUINCY

The Life and Times of Congressman John Quincy Adams. Leonard L. Richards. New York: Oxford University Press.

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 10/13/86, pp. 157–158.

"A short, illuminating study of a unique congressional career; the seventeen-year service (1831–48) of a former President in the House of Representatives."

BEATON, CECIL

Beaton in Vogue. Josephine Ross. Potter.

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 10/13/86, p. 159.

"The author, a former staff member of the magazine [*Vogue*], writes a short biography of the photographer-draftsman-scene-designer-and-liver-of-the-good-life, and then turns the book over to a warehouse of Beaton's oeuvre."

BECKETT, SAMUEL

The Beckett Country. Eoin O'Brien. Black Cat/Faber. $60.00.

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 2/9/87, p. 104.

"This huge volume is a geography of Samuel Beckett's childhood, youth and early manhood—encompassing the Dublin Mountains and the coast of Dublin Bay, with the city of Dublin at its center."

BISMARCK, OTTO VON

Bismarck, Urpreusse Und Reichsgrunder. Ernst Engleberg. Wolf Jobst Siedler Verlag. pp. 839.

Reviewed by Gordon A. Craig. *New York Review of Books,* 9/25/86, pp. 62–65.

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"It is not a complete biography, since it stops at 1871, but it is a splendid start, showing a sovereign command of the sources, filled with new material from the reordered Bismarck papers in Schonhausen, the Gorchakov papers and the Archive for Foreign Affairs in Moscow, and other collections in Bond and Vienna, and written in a clear economical style that is never dogmatic and always persuasive."

BOSWELL, JAMES

James Boswell: The Later Years 1769–1795. Frank Brady. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984. pp. xviii, 609. $24.95.

Reviewed by David Daiches. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 19, no. 3, Spring 1986, pp. 412–414.

"Frank Brady is well known as a productive member of the group of scholars associated with the "Boswell factory" at Yale: he has co-edited two volumes of Boswell's journals and written an important study of Boswell's political career. Now he has produced the second part of a biography of Boswell of which F. A. Pottle, the dean of Boswellians, produced the first in 1966. It was a challenging task to follow Pottle's splendid work . . . One cannot be quite as enthusiastic in praise of Brady's work, fine though it is, for it has not the dimensions of Pottle's. But it is a thoughtful and perceptive study based on rich scholarship, and it provides a fascinating account of the second part of Boswell's life."

CASTRO, FIDEL

Fidel: A Critical Portrait. Tad Szulc. New York: William Morrow and Company. pp. 703. $19.95.

Reviewed by Jorge G. Castaneda. *The Book Review, The Los Angeles Times,* 11/16/86, pp. 1, 13.

"Overall, Szulc has sketched a meticulously honest, painstakingly detailed and essentially complete portrait of a revolutionary as a young man."

Reviewed by Stanley Hoffman. *The New York Times Book Review,* 11/30/86, p. 11.

". . . more than two-thirds of the book deals with the period that precedes the triumph of Mr. Castro's revolution in January 1959. This is too bad, not only because there is a great deal of repetition and excess of detail in the first two-thirds, but also because the focus shifts from Castro the rebel and revolutionary to the history of Cuba under Mr. Castro's leadership, a shift that makes the vivid and complex personality of the leader more remote than it ought to be."

CATHER, WILLA

Willa Cather: The Emerging Voice. Sharon O'Brien. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 464. $24.95.

Reviewed by Carolyn Heilbrun. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/14/86, pp. 3, 42.

"Ms. O'Brien's biography is a three way revelation: in its use of sophisticated feminist theory to explore the unwritten or misread aspects of Cather's life, for example her cross-dressing and assumption of male identity in college; in its unembarrassed and intelligent analysis of Cather's lesbianism and the meaning of women's love for women in all its aspects; in its literary competence which examines Cather's fictions for that subtext of female anxiety and despair that we have only recently learned to identify."

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Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 2/23/86, p. 136.

"This biographical and literary study traces Willa Cather's life from her birth, in Virginia, in 1873, and her migration with her family to Nebraska, in 1883, to her career as an editor and writer, which, beginning in 1896, took her from rural and small-town America to Pittsburgh, Boston, and New York."

CHAPLIN, THOMAS B.

Tombee: Portrait of a Cotton Planter (with "The Journal of Thomas B. Chaplin, 1822–1890," edited and annotated with the assistance of Susan W. Walker). Theodore Rosengarten. New York: William Morrow. pp. 750. $22.95.

Reviewed by Bertram Wyatt-Brown. *The New York Review of Books,* 2/26/87, pp. 12–15.

"In this impressive study, Rosengarten has made the life of a single human being a valuable touchstone for understanding ourselves and our blemished past."

CHEKHOV, ANTON

Chekhov. Henry Troyat. New York: E. P. Dutton. pp. 364. $22.50

Reviewed by Jascha Kessler. *The Book Review, The Los Angeles Times,* 11/16/86, p. 4.

"Troyat takes us through Chekhov's exemplary career without comment on the times or burdensome 'critical analysis' of the work, which will go on speaking to us by itself."

Reviewed by John Bayley. *The New York Review of Books,* 12/4/86, pp. 21–23.

"... Henry Troyat has succeeded in doing an absorbing study of Chekhov, for whom he seems to feel more genuine affection than for the colorful characters of Russian literature—Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy—who are the subjects of his previous biographies. He finds the key to his hero's character in a remark made by Chekhov's friend Potapenko: 'He resisted leading a private existence.' "

Reviewed by Jules Koslow. *The New York Times Book Review,* 12/28/86, p. 12.

"Aided by a lucid translation from the French by Michael Henry Heim, Mr. Troyat has given us an outstanding biography of Chekhov, a literary artist who Tolstoy in one of his more magnanimous moments called 'a beautiful, magnificent man.' "

CHESTERTON, G. K.

G. K. Chesterton. Michael Ffinch. San Francisco: Harper and Row. pp. 369. $18.95.

Reviewed by Hugh Kenner. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/22/87, p. 18.

"He [Chesterton] awaits definition; there's still a book to be written. Meanwhile, Mr. Ffinch, who writes readably and has some new stories, merits gratitude for keeping his name alive."

CHURCHILL, WINSTON S.

Winston S. Churchill, Volume VII: Road to Victory 1941–1945. Martin Gilbert. New York: Houghton Mifflin. pp. 1417. $40.00.

Reviewed by Warren F. Kimball. *The New York Times Book Review,* 12/14/86, p. 12.

"For those who find Churchill endlessly interesting, as I do, this book will provide many hours of pleasure. For those who have never encountered him, it could prove a

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fascinating if fatal overdose . . . Even without analysis, it is a treasure trove, for Mr. Gilbert has plowed through a massive amount of official documentation."

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 1/19/87, pp. 92–93.

"The minutiae that Mr. Gilbert has amassed show the Prime Minister in almost every waking hour, in his own words, and in the words of those who saw and worked with him. Few characters, one supposes, could support such scrutiny, yet Churchill emerges from this study not only admirable but loveable. Quite apart from his major virtues, Churchill—even now, even on paper—is a wonderfully entertaining companion."

CONRAD, JOSEPH

The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad. Volume Two: 1898–1902. Edited by Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 483. $44.50.

Reviewed by Louis Menard. *New York Times Book Review,* 1/25/87, p. 16.

"One of the advantages of this collection—besides that of providing accurate texts of unpublished correspondence and of many letters that have long been available in unreliable editions—is that it enables one to appreciate the extent to which some of Conrad's letters are themselves part of his achievement as a writer."

DALI, SALVADOR

Salvador Dali. Meryle Secrest. New York: E. P. Dutton. pp. 307. $22.50.

Reviewed by Grace Glueck. *The New York Times Book Review,* 11/30/86, pp. 9–10.

"Her [Secrest's] book, written in consultation with Dali's friends and family members but not the aged subject himself, attempts to explore the emotional basis of his art and his extravagantly eccentric behavior. She does throw some light on his compulsive motifs, but this is ground that has been gone over before, not the least by the painter himself. As a psychologist-esthetician, she is less convincing than as a straightforward chronicler of an extraordinary career built on both talent and con, the latter eclipsing the former as Dali's greed for money escalated."

DOSTOEVSKY, FEODOR

Dostoevsky: The Stir of Liberation, 1860–1865. Joseph Frank. Princeton: Princeton University Press. pp. 395.

Reviewed by V. S. Pritchett. *The New York Review of Books,* September 25, 1986, pp. 11–12.

"[This is] the third volume of Joseph Frank's exhaustive and responsive examination of Dostoevsky and his works."

DREISER, THEODORE

Theodore Dreiser: At the Gates of the City, 1871–1907. Richard Lingeman. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. pp. 478. $22.95.

Reviewed by Cynthia Ozick. *The New York Times Book Review,* 11/9/86, pp. 3, 29, 31.

"This first volume of Richard Lingeman's two-part biography of Theodore Dreiser reaches only seven years beyond the initial publication of 'Sister Carrie,' when, in the wake of early neglect, the book was successfully reissued."

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EDELMAN, MAREK

Shielding the Flame: An Intimate Conversation with Dr. Marek Edelman, the Last Surviving Leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Hanna Krall. New York: Holt. pp. 124. $13.95.

Reviewed by Norman Davis. *The New York Review of Books,* 11/20/86, pp. 21–23.

"It is not a straightforward presentation of Edelman's historical memoirs, but rather an attempt to record the workings of his memory, with all the quirks of fragmentary recall, of moralizing and rationalizing. It is episodic in character, jumping back and forward between the horrors of the war years and the life-and-death crisis of modern heart surgery."

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 12/15/86, pp. 128–129.

"At the center of this volume are his recollections of the battle in the ghetto, of his fellow-resistants, and of details of daily life in Warsaw under the Nazis."

EISENHOWER, DWIGHT D.

Eisenhower at War, 1943–1945. David Eisenhower. New York: Random House. pp. 977.

Reviewed by Theodore Draper. *New York Review of Books,* 9/25/86, pp. 30–38.

"There has been considerable interest of late in Eisenhower the president; this book may set off a new wave of interest in Eisenhower the Supreme Commander. In his introduction, David Eisenhower tells us that this is only the first of three volumes on the Eisenhower years. He is apparently prepared to spend a good part of his life on his grandfather's career. If he carries through to the end, it will be a unique historical monument; no grandson has ever taken on such a magisterial task on behalf of a famous grandfather."

Ike: His Life and Times. Piers Brendon. San Francisco: Harper and Row. pp. 478. $21.95.

Reviewed by Townsend Hoopes. *The New York Times Book Review,* 11/30/86, pp. 29–31.

"What is new and arresting in 'Ike' is the author's moral penetration and his concentration on gathering evidence to show Eisenhower's chronic vacillation and remarkable opaque moral standards. Piers Brendon, a British biographer of Winston Churchill, among others, writes from a center-left perspective and gives some evidence of how inherently difficult it is for a foreigner to master the arcane amplification and intransigencies of American politics."

FITZGERALD/KENNEDY

The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys. Doris Kearns Goodwin. New York: Simon and Schuster. pp. 932. $22.95.

Reviewed by Geoffrey C. Wade. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/15/87.

"A former professor of government at Harvard University with political connections to the Kennedys, she [Kearns] had the cooperation of friends and family members and was allowed to draw on 150 cartons of unsorted personal papers to which no other researcher had been given access. Among those with whom Mr. Collier and Mr.

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Horowitz [other biographers] objected strenuously at the time. Still she does not so much excuse the less attractive chapters of the Kennedy saga as attempt to understand them, while providing the kind of informed historical context without which no family loses sight of the fact that family *matters,* that which happens within one generation inevitably has its impact on the next."

GODWIN, WILLIAM

William Godwin. Peter H. Marshall. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984. pp. 497. $30.00.

Reviewed by B. J. Tysdahl. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 19, no. 3, Spring 1986, pp. 435–437.

"Peter Marshall's simple title reflects his strategy. He does not concentrate his biography around any one of Godwin's many and varied activities, but follows the course of his life slowly and carefully from his birth in 1756 to his death in 1836 and so on, though briefly, to his posthumous presence in the works of others."

HORNE

The Hornes: An American Family. Gail Lumet Buckley. New York: Alfred Knopf. pp. 262. $18.95.

Reviewed by Robert Hemenway. *The New York Times Book Review.*

"In 'The Hornes,' Gail Lumet Buckley argues that in the century between emancipation and the civil rights movement, America's black bourgeoisie—a small privileged class dependent for identity upon superior achievement, strong leaders, light skin, and 'favored slave' origins—created an 'ideal world' that mirrored white values. This world came to an end, Mrs. Buckley believes, with the rise of equal opportunity, which created political, educational and economic possibilities that 'go far beyond anything even imagined by the old bourgeoisie.' "

KINGSLEY, MARY

A Voyager Out: The Life of Mary Kingsley. Katherine Frank. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company. pp. 333. $18.95.

Reviewed by Elinor Langor. *The New York Times Book Review,* 11/30/86, p. 28.

"Ms. Frank, herself, according to the dust jacket, has lived in West Africa for six years, and it is obvious from her writing, some of which is very good, that the landscape that refreshed Kingsley, refreshes her too. Kipling notwithstanding, there were things Kingsley was afraid of: loneliness, purposelessness, boredom and suffocation, to mention only a few. But she also transcended them. It is one of the merits of this mature and satisfying biography that the reader can sense her doing so."

LUNT, ALFRED AND LYNN FONTANNE

The Fabulous Lunts. Jared Brown. New York: Atheneum.

Reviewed by Brendan Gill. *The New Yorker,* 10/13/86, pp. 153–155.

"Brown, who is professor of theatre at Western Illinois University, performs the feat, appropriate to academics, of inspiring us to ask all the big bowwow questions about the Lunts, but when it comes to answers we may find ourselves as hardpressed to hit upon them as the Professor himself is."

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LUXEMBURG, ROSA

Rosa Luxemburg: A Life. Elzbieta Ettiger. Beacon Press. pp. 286. $24.95.

Reviewed by James Joll. *The New York Review of Books,* 3/26/87, pp. 3, 6–7.

"A study of Rosa Luxemburg is hard to write . . . But at least Elzbieta Ettiger has provided us with many clues to help us understand Rosa's troubled, sensitive, and impetuous nature and her reactions to the tumult of her time."

MATISSE, HENRI

Matisse: The Man and His Art, 1869–1918. Jack Flam. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. pp. 523. $75.00.

Reviewed by Jed Perl. The New York Times Book Review, 2/28/86, pp. 13–14.

"Many people are probably going to prefer Mr. Flam's orderly chronology to the megalomaniacal, almost Balzacian breadth of Mr. [Pierre] Schneider's study. But Mr. Flam simply doesn't come across as a personality large enough to confront his enormous subject. He approaches the task armed with some old-fashioned methodology, a smattering of Freud and a dash of structuralism. But they do not suffice. Mr. Flam is defeated by the artist who wouldn't talk about his 'soul.' "

MEW, CHARLOTTE

Charlotte Mew and Her Friends. Penelope Fitzgerald. London: Collins. pp. 240. £12.95.

Reviewed by Brad Lethauser. *The New York Review of Books,* 12/15/86, pp. 25–31.

"Not the least among the biography's virtues is a respectful restraint that keeps intrusive psychological speculations to a minimum. Fitzgerald lets the poet's story tell itself."

MITCHELL, LUCY SPRAGUE

Lucy Sprague Mitchell. The Making of a Modern Woman. Joyce Antler. New Haven: Yale University Press. pp. 436. $29.95.

Reviewed by Ellen Chesler. *The New York Times Book Review,* 3/22/87, p. 39.

"Joyce Antler, who teaches American studies at Brandeis University, scrupulously avoids judgments that are far better left to the reader."

MONROE, MARILYN

Marilyn. Gloria Steinem. New York: Henry Holt and Company. pp. 182. $24.95.

Reviewed by Diana Trilling. *The New York Times Book Review,* 12/21/86, pp. 1, 23.

"In writing about Marilyn Monroe, Gloria Steinem for the most part admirably avoids the ideological excess that we have come to associate with the women's movement—Monroe emerges from her book a far more dimensional figure than she would have been if she had been presented as simply the victim of a male dominated society."

MONTGOMERY, BERNARD LAW

Monty: The Final Years of the Field-Marshall, 1944–1976. Nigel Hamilton. New York: McGraw-Hill. pp. 996. $29.95.

Reviewed by Robin Higham. *The New York Times Book Review,* 12/28/86, p. 11.

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"If American readers can get beyond their anger or anguish over the portraits of Gen. Dwight David Eisenhower and Gen. Omar Bradley in the more than 900 pages of this third and final volume of Nigel Hamilton's biography of Field Marshall Bernard Law Montgomery, they will be rewarded. They will find an incisive portrait of Viscount Montgomery, commander of the northern group of Allied armies in Europe from D-day to the end of the war in Europe in 1945."

NABOKOV, VLADIMIR

VN: The Life and Art of Vladimir Nabokov. Crown. pp. 398. $19.98.

Reviewed by Roberta Smoodin. *The Book Review, Los Angeles Times,* 9/28/86, pp. 1, 15.

"Given the fact that Vladimir Nabokov, the most private and mendacious of great writers, designated in his will that his personal papers could not be made public until 75 years after the deaths of his wife and son, 'VN: The Life and Art of Vladimir Nabokov' by Andrew Field is certainly the most exhaustive and revealing biography of the writer we can see until well into the next century. It is a fine piece of detective work and analysis, a hybrid work that would please Nabokov, if any biography could."

NIXON, PATRICIA

Pat Nixon: The Untold Story. Julie Nixon Eisenhower. New York: Simon and Schuster. pp. 480. $19.95.

Reviewed by Judy Woodruff. *The New York Times Book Review,* 11/30/86, p. 12.

"Pat Nixon never got much attention from the Nixon image makers, and her daughter corrects some of the misimpressions that came from her 'plastic Pat' image. She is convincing in dismissing charges that her mother drank heavily during the closing months of the Nixon Presidency. More important, she paints a picture of an intelligent and sensitive woman who lived a miserable life during her husband's political career. This sad portrait brightens only with recent years, as Pat Nixon finally became free to worry less about her husband's travails and politics and focus more on her daughters and grandchildren."

Reviewed by Joy Billington. *The Book Review, Los Angeles Times,* 11/30/86, pp. 1, 6.

"Julie Nixon Eisenhower's book fulfills its aims. It is a book about courage in the face of overwhelming odds."

POPIELUZKO, JERZY

The Priest and the Policeman: The Courageous Life and Cruel Murder of Father Jerzy Popieluzko. John Moody and Roger Boyes. New York: Summit Books. pp. 251. $17.95.

Reviewed by Norman Davies. *The New York Times Book Review,* 3/15/87, p. 9.

"This is an important story, well told. But there is much that remains untold."

RAND, AYN

The Passion of Ayn Rand. Barbara Branden. New York: Doubleday & Company. pp. 442. $19.95.

Reviewed by Peter J. Boyer. *The New York Times Book Review.*

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"... there is something appealing, even a touch of grandeur, about the figure who emerges from Mrs. Branden's somewhat tortured account: the young woman who arrives in America clutching her Remington Rand typewriter (she took her name from it); who not only renames herself but proceeds to remake herself in the shape of her passionately held ideals; the hero-worshipper who invented improbably heroic figures in her novels and who convinced very ordinary people that they too could be heroes; the mature and successful figure who always refused compromise, no matter what the cost, and who faced bitter personal disappointment and pain with unending courage. One can understand why this individual, whatever her intellectual and personal foibles, could command loyalty and inspire commitment."

REITMAN, BEN

The Damndest Radical: The Life and World of Ben Reitman, Chicago's Celebrated Social Reformer, Hobo King, and Whorehouse Physician. Roger A. Bruns. Urbana: The University of Illinois Press. pp. 332. $24.95.

Reviewed by Patrick Clinton. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/1/87, p. 17.

"For most readers the name Ben Reitman is known principally from the collection of letters by Emma Goldman discovered among his papers in 1975. Passionate, eloquent and startlingly sexual, these letters documented Goldman's tempestuous love affair with Reitman, her manager and traveling companion. Now Roger A. Bruns, publications director of the National Archives Historical Publications and Records Commission, has provided us with a biography of Goldman's 'dearest hobo.' He proves to be a remarkable man in his own right."

ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN DELANO

"FDR: The New Deal Years, 1933–1937. Kenneth S. Davis. Random House.

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 10/27/86, pp. 144–146.

"This third volume of what promises to be a great political biography opens just as Roosevelt left state government to become President. Mr. Davis's general thesis is that by 1933, when Roosevelt took office, the nation was ready for a radical reorganization of its economic structure but Roosevelt himself was not."

SHCHARANSKY, ANATOLY

Shcharansky: Hero of Our Time. Martin Gilbert. New York: Viking/Elizabeth Sifton Books. pp. 467.

Reviewed by Peter Reddaway. *New York Review of Books,* 9/25/86, pp. 13–18.

"... [Alexander] Lerner had discussed Shcharansky as 'a hero of the Jewish emigration movement on such a scale as heroes in the Bible.' Shcharansky has a sense of humor that we seldom encounter in the Bible, yet Lerner's judgment strikes me as true. Martin Gilbert's biography is the proof."

SINATRA, FRANK

His Way: The Unauthorized Biography of Frank Sinatra. Kitty Kelly. New York: Bantam. pp. 575. $21.95.

Reviewed by E. J. Hobsbawm. *The New York Review of Books,* 2/12/87, pp. 11–14.

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"A striking example of the impossibility of recognizing the jazz threads within American popular culture is Kitty Kelly's scandal-mongering biography of Frank Sinatra, who was in his day undeniably an excellent jazz singer."

STERNE, LAURENCE

Laurence Sterne: The Later Years. Arthur H. Cash. New York: Metheun. pp. 390. $49.95.

Reviewed by Max Byrd. *The New York Times Book Review,* 1/11/87, p. 13.

"Arthur H. Cash's biography, 'Laurence Sterne,' now takes its place as the standard scholarly life, superseding the massive but out-of-date work of Wilbur L. Cross first published in 1909."

Reviewed by John Bayley. *The New York Review of Books,* 3/26/87, pp. 29–31.

"The first volume of Cash's biography describes his time as a student, his struggle for Church preferment, and his unlucky marriage. 'The Later Years' opens with Sterne's breakthrough into fame and success as an author, and his preferment, through the good offices of Lord Fauonberg, to the living Coxwold near York, with a parsonage—still surviving, now a museum—which Sterne delighted in and which his friends were to dub 'Shandy Hall.' "

STEVENS, WALLACE

Secretaries of the Moon: The Letters of Wallace Stevens and Jose Rodrigues Feo. Edited by Beverly Coyle and Alan Filreis. Durham N.C.: Duke University Press. pp. 210. $19.95.

Reviewed by Heberto Padilla. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/8/87, p. 33.

" 'Secretaries of the Moon' is a book that will excite anybody interested in knowing a Wallace Stevens until now unknown, in a dialogue with one of the most intelligent critics in Latin America."

SULLIVAN, LOUIS

Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work. Robert Twombly. New York: Viking/Sifton Books. pp. 530. $29.95.

Reviewed by Martin Filler. *The New York Review of Books,* 1/29/87, pp. 30–34.

"Though Twombly is far more sympathetic to his subject than some other current historians, his valuable insights (and there are a number of them) are so lost in a thicket of irrelevant minutiae that the author has difficulty in engaging the attention even of the specialist: what of the lay reader who wants to learn more about Sullivan's pathbreaking architecture and his complex personality?"

TOLSTOY, LEO

Tolstoy's Diaries. Leo Tolstoy. Edited and translated from the Russian by R. F. Christian. Scribners.

Reviewed by John Updike. *The New Yorker,* 10/13/86, pp. 116–130.

"A reading through the two-volume abridgement of 'Tolstoy's Diaries' . . . is a claustrophobic experience, an intimate long sojourn with a mentality so morose and censorious, so puritanically perfectionist and dourly dissatisfied, that any significant creative achievement would seem to have been out of the question. The sunlight of Tolstoy's art scarcely penetrates into the monk's cell of his unremitting moralism and

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self-scorn; the artist's thoroughly illumined world, with its characteristic Tolstoyan feel of simultaneous transparence and density, lies beyond the horizon of the diaries, which began as a schoolboy's notations on his strenuous self-improvement and ended as an old-man's melancholy, oblique communications with his hysterical wife and an unseen host of more or less burdensome disciples."

TRUMAN, BESS

Bess W. Truman. Margaret Truman. New York: MacMillan. pp. 445. $19.95.

Reviewed by Kenneth S. Davis. *The New York Review of Books,* 12/4/86, pp. 28–37.

"In letter after letter quoted by his daughter he [Truman] speaks to Bess of his loneliness, his longing for her, his begging wish that she could be with him. Yet it is also clear that she loved and cared for him to the limit of her capacity, and was fiercely loyal to him, appalled though she was when he yielded to FDR's pressure to run for vice-president. On many occasions she served him and history well by interposing her cold common sense between his hot temper and its foolish expression in public."

TRUMAN, HARRY S.

Truman. Roy Jenkins. San Francisco: Harper and Row. pp. 232. $17.95.

Reviewed by John Frederick Martin. *The New York Times Book Review,* 11/9/86, p. 31.

"In rendering his opinions, the author is fair without being solemn. Himself a Europeanist and past president of the European Commission, Mr. Jenkins dwells on foreign affairs—the Marshall Plan, recognition of Israel, the creation of NATO, the Korean War—somewhat at the expense of Truman's domestic achievements. He shows us how Truman and his advisors shaped the postwar world. And he reminds us of how much that world has changed."

Reviewed by Kenneth S. Davis. *The New York Review of Books,* 12/4/86, pp. 28–37.

"Roy Jenkin's 'Truman' is . . . composed in the concise, ironic, judgmental style that Lytton Strachey impressed upon the art of biography. I know of no book better designed to give most readers a swift, accurate, and highly readable view of Truman as a man and as a president."

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* 12/15/86, pp. 129–130.

"This biography appraises a host of matters, from the Truman family's social standing to the tacit agreement that defined American party politics in the Truman era."

Truman: The Rise to Power. Richard Lawrence Miller. New York: McGraw-Hill. pp. 536. $19.95.

Reviewed by Kenneth S. Davis. *The New York Review of Books,* 12/4/86, pp. 28–37.

". . . Miller, though refreshingly capable of moral indignation, is fair-minded; he has prodigiously researched hitherto neglected sources; and this reviewer at least upon closing the book, found his opinion of Truman's mental and moral qualities somewhat raised by the new information that Miller presents."

VICTORIA, QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN

Victoria: An Intimate Biography. Stanley Weintraub. New York: Truman Tallet Books. pp. 700. $26.95.

Reviewed by Roger Hinkle. *The New York Times Book Review,* 3/22/87, p. 16.

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"It is a busy work, though often presented crisply and with vitality. Like quintessential Victorian furniture, it is lavishly, excessively inlaid with the scenes and bric-a-brac of incidental facts."

WARBURG, ABY

Aby Warburg. E. H. Gombrich. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. $29.95.

Reviewed by George Steiner. *The New Yorker,* 2/2/87, pp. 95–98.

"Even the outsider, the reader inclined to skim over one of the more technical sections will, via Gombrich's lucid, finely written memoir, come into direct contact with a human being as complex, as characteristic of certain crises in modernity, as any to be found in fiction."

WILLARD, FRANCES

Frances Willard: A Biography. Ruth Bordin. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. pp. 294. $25.00.

Reviewed by Elisabeth Griffin. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/14/87, p. 33.

"Ms. Bordin's vivid study adds to the list of recent 'great woman' biographies and allows both for comparisons among them and for revision and re-evaluation of the history of the Gilded Age. Frances Willard's story is a strong testament to the essential role of women as reformers."

WILSON, EDMUND

The Fifties: The Diaries of Edmund Wilson. Edited by Leon Edel. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $25.00.

Reviewed by V. S. Pritchett. *The New Yorker,* 1/5/87, pp. 83–85.

" 'The Fifties' is both a diary and notebook—a strange mingling of the minute self-observation, the sudden sexual confession of a candid man, all eyes and ears, a grammarian, hostile to Fowler, a man very much for the fuss of the word, and wonderfully wrong sometimes about simple things."

WOLFE, THOMAS

Look Homeward: A Life of Thomas Wolfe. David Herbert Donald. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. pp. 579. $24.95.

Reviewed by Harold Bloom. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/8/87, pp. 13–14.

"Mr. Donald depicts a man marked by violence, jealousy, paranoid mood shifts, sudden lusts quickly satiated and a remorseless propensity to be his own worse enemy."

WRIGHT, FRANK LLOYD

Frank Lloyd Wright: Letters Trilogy. Edited by Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer. Fresno: The Press at California State University. *Letters to Apprentices,* pp. 211, $17.95 cloth, $8.95 paper; *Letters to Architects,* pp. 227, $18.95 cloth, $9.95 paper; *Letters to Clients,* pp. 320, $21.95 cloth, $12.95 paper.

Reviewed by Ada Louise Huxable. *The New York Times Book Review,* 2/15/87, pp. 3, 39–40.

"The letters add both new and familiar material to the expanding body of Wright literature that has been coming from the Taliesin Press in recent years."

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American Culture and African Literature and Culture

Prepared by Mark Helbling

BILBO, THEODORE

Redneck Liberal: Theodore G. Bilbo and the New Deal. Chester M. Morgan. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985. pp. xiii, 274. $27.50.

Reviewed by Charles W. Eagles. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 3, December, 1986. pp. 795–796.

A revisionist study of Mississippi "demagogue" Theodore G. Bilbo whose "red neck" style, Morgan argues, has obscured his liberal New Deal sympathies and voting record.

COWLEY, MALCOLM

The Early Career of Malcolm Cowley: A Humanist Among the Moderns. James Michael Kempf. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985. pp. xiv, 145. £17.50.

Reviewed by Martin Pumphrey. *Journal of American Studies,* vol. 20, no. 3, December 1986, pp. 473–474.

Closely documented account of Cowley's growth as a literary critic in the years prior to *Exile's Return.* Seen as consistently a literary humanist, Cowley's 1930s criticism of the "escapism" of the 1920s no longer seems a radical shift in his thinking.

DAMAS, LEON-GONTRAN

Leon-Gontran Damas: L'homme et l'oeuvre. Daniel Racine. Dakar: Presence Africaine, 1983. pp. 238.

Reviewed by Martin Steins. *Research in African Literatures,* vol. 17, no. 4, Winter, 1986, pp. 587–588.

A helpful introduction to this generally neglected and not always trustworthy Caribbean poet.

FANON, FRANTZ

Holy Violence: The Revolutionary Thought of Frantz Fanon. B. Marie Perinbam. Washington: Three Continents Press, 1982. pp. 182. $12.00.

Reviewed by Hal Wylie. *Research in African Literatures,* vol. 17, no. 4, Winter, 1986, pp. 597–599.

An "intellectual biography" that seeks to link Fanon's psychopolitical theories with the "facts" of his life. The moral and political significance of violence is argued to be central to Fanon's social and political thought.

HASTIE, WILLIAM

William Hastie. Gilbert Ware. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. pp. x, 305. £28.50.

Reviewed by John White. *Journal of American Studies,* vol. 20, no. 2, August 1986, pp. 312–313.

A useful yet unbalanced account of America's first black federal judge. Too little attention is given to significant figures in Hastie's life and too much attention to extraneous detail.

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LESSING, DORIS

Doris Lessing. Lorna Sage. London and New York: Methuen, 1983. pp. 96. $4.24.

Reviewed by Roberta Rubenstein. *Research in African Literatures,* vol. 17, no. 3, Fall, 1986, pp. 411–413.

The theme of exile admirably serves to explicate Lessing's work as well as to relate biography and imagination.

MARAN, RENÉ

René Maran, the Black Frenchman: A Bio-Critical Study. Femi Ojo-Ade. Washington: Three Continents Press, 1984. pp. 278. $25.00 cloth, $12.00 paper.

Reviewed by Chidi Ikonne. *Review of African Literature,* vol. 17, no. 4, Winter, 1986, pp. 603–605.

This is a useful though by no means definitive study. In general, Femi Ojo-Ade substantiates his thesis that Maran is best understood as a black Frenchman and not a vaunted figure in African literature.

PLAATJE, SOL

Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist, 1876-1932. Brian Willan. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984. pp. 436. $12.95.

Reviewed by N. Chabani Manganyi. *Research in African Literatures,* vol. 17, no. 3, Fall, 1986, pp. 393–395.

Life and work of a remarkable African nationalist as well as a social and cultural history of what was to become the Union of South Africa—1910. Events and descriptions, however, tend to displace the individual himself. Sartre's *Search For A Method* and *The Family of the Idiot* remain valuable guides to help avoid the pitfalls of the "biographical enterprise."

SULLIVAN, LOUIS

Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work. Robert Twombly. New York: Viking, 1986. pp. xiii, 530. $29.95.

Reviewed by Charles B. Hosmer Jr. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 3, December, 1986, pp. 774–775.

Twombly's study, rich in details of Sullivan's relationship to family and professional peers, steers a middle course between early interpretations of Sullivan as a "true prophet" of modernism and later studies of Sullivan as a "victim of serious character flaws."

SWANSON, CLAUDE A.

Claude A. Swanson of Virginia: A Political Biography. Henry C. Ferrell, Jr. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985. pp. x, 294. $28.00.

Reviewed by William Larsen. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 3, December, 1986, pp. 785–786.

A definitive biography of an important Virginia political leader (1892–1939). The virtues of this biography—sensitivity to the kaleidoscopic, overlapping factions and subfac-

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tions of localism, economic greed and personality—are its limitations, a failure to see continuity and stability.

WAYNE, ANTHONY

Anthony Wayne: Soldier of the Early Republic. Paul David Nelson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985. pp. x, 368. $27.50.

Reviewed by Brian Holden Reid. *Journal of American Studies,* vol. 20, no. 3, December 1986, p. 494.

A sympathetic and lively account of a truculent, quarrelsome, self-absorbed 18th century American commander.

WEYERHAUSER, PHIL

Phil Weyerhauser: Lumberman. Charles E. Twining. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985. pp. xvii, 401. $25.00.

Reviewed by Robert E. Ficken. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 3, December, 1986, pp. 796–797.

This much-worked genre—the authorized account—presents the work and innovation of this major transitional figure in the history of the American timber industry.

WRIGHT, FANNY

Fanny Wright: Rebel in America. Celia Morris Eckhardt. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984. pp. xii, 337. £18.00.

Reviewed by Richard Carwardine. *Journal of American Studies,* vol. 20, no. 2, August 1986, pp. 300–301.

The first study since 1939 of this 19th century feminist and radical social critic. Eckhardt's fine analysis is somewhat limited by her incomplete reading of the secondary literature on abolitionism and Jacksonian America.

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Notes on Contributors

Amy B. Millstone ["Gyp and the Reconstruction of (Self-)Consciousness"] is an Assistant Professor of French at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208. At present, she is finishing a biography of Gyp.

Mary Ann Rygiel (Auburn, AL 36830) ["Sofya Kovalevskaya's *A Russian Childhood* as Poetic Autobiography"] has research interests in interdisciplinary studies and in the nineteenth century, and she has recently published an article on Hopkins and Herbert in *The Hopkins Quarterly.*

Mary Kingsbury ["Congenial Associates: The Biographical Essays of William Osler"] is Professor of Library and Information Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Her research interests include biographies written for children, 1680–1980 (supported by a UNC Research Council Grant) and William Osler.

Marnie Jones ["Telling His Own Story: Henry James's *William Wetmore Story*"] is Assistant Professor of English at the University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Florida 32216. Her articles on biography have appeared in *The New Criterion, The American Scholar,* and *Bronte Society Transactions.*

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Bernard Crick

Orwell and Biography

Bernard Crick delivered the following inaugural lecture as first Biography Fellow on 27 April 1987 at the Korean Studies Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa. Neil Abercrombie, a member of the "Biography" Working Editorial Committee, introduced Professor Crick's talk.

Introduction

In his classic work *In Defense of Politics,* Bernard Crick states: "It all comes down to the fact that there are two great enemies of politics: indifference to human suffering and the passionate quest for certainty in matters which are essentially political." Thus, we may view it as a savage irony that politics is often the object of profound hatred and suspicion particularly in states regarded as democratic in design—precisely because of their inherent lack of certainty and inevitable compromise of what is regarded by many in such societies as inviolate values.

For Crick this leads to the fundamental necessity of the existence of the citizen as active participant rather than passive recipient if one is to equate as he does politics with conscious liberation in terms other than empty rhetoric.

For just as it is Bernard Crick's great triumph to have recognized and explicated George Orwell's life and work as that of a writer first and foremost political to the core, it is his pleasure by avocation and profession to celebrate politics as freedom. In his estimation "politics is the pre-occupation of free men and its existence is a test of freedom." He therefore shares with de Tocqueville his observation about democracies that

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> The nations of our time cannot prevent the conditions of men becoming equal, it depends upon themselves whether the principle of equality is to lead to servitude or freedom, to knowledge or barbarism, to prosperity or wretchedness.

In his own analysis of politics as citizen's enterprise and in his perception of Orwell as a political writer, Bernard Crick succeeds in restating with biting clarity what should be obvious and yet is so easily obscured in the psycho-babble and media pablum of what passes for political discourse today—that popular democracy divorced from its social context in terms of supportive individual and group action is reduced to barren posturing and vicious banality. Ideals may be mindlessly expostulated devoid of even minimal commitment to their realization in any form recognizable as humane.

It is in this dimension then—the human dimension—that Bernard Crick speaks to us this evening and it is through biography—in this instance his work on George Orwell—that we seek to illuminate the corners of self-discovery and actualization within us.

It has been and is the aim of our journal that we be a forum for all well-considered biographical scholarship, to stimulate the critical judgement of life-writing through new information, sharper definitions, fresh interpretations, and well-argued evaluation.

Bernard Crick epitomizes that task for us. He embodies what Orwell sought most of himself—to make political writing into art. His appearance here tonight and throughout this week as the first Biography Fellow of the Biographical Research Center marks a milestone in the recognition of *Biography* as a journal of pre-eminent value in the world of academic excellence we seek so diligently at the University of Hawaii.

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow lovers of biography—our honored and most welcome guest—Bernard Crick.

The real title of this would have been too long winded, "The Difficulties of Writing Biography in General and of George Orwell's in Particular." Those are the reflections of someone who came to write the life of a major figure but does not intend to do it again. I am neither a professional biographer nor a student of biography.

The word "biography" can create as many different expectations as the word "Orwell." There is "Orwell" as Orwellian—the gloomy prophet-pessimist of *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* so it is said, though I see the book as Swiftian satire if only marginally more cheerful for that; and there is Orwell as "Orwell-like," the essayist, the humourist, the

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humanist, the lover of nature and of all small, curious things. The word "biography" can mean a memorial or a panegyric; it can mean a hatchet job, or it can simply mean a good read. Now, of course, the hatchet job, whether of literary journalism (stemming from Lytton Strachey) or of political journalism (stemming from W. T. Stead) was itself simply a reaction both to the Moneypenny and Buckle-like monumental "good" lives, in which as among Lutheran pietists all mundane facts are held to be equal and be equally sacred and all lively facts to be suppressed; and also a reaction to the mercifully shorter celebratory lives, exemplary lives, Robert Southey on Nelson or Samuel Smiles on the great explorers and inventors, often published in series well-called "Popular Lives." This tradition has not died out, nor should it. "Let us now praise famous men" and women indeed: "There is a time and place for all things." I notice that Michael Foot now calls his *Life of Aneurin Bevan* in its paperback edition, "a polemical biography." Perhaps he is reacting to some criticism by pedantic historians that his book was a trifle partial. And so splendidly it was. There is a place in our culture for holding up certain lives as noble examples, whether of Nye Bevan, the Queen Mother or Ms. Onassis, according to the reader's values. I do not wish to say that these are not biography, any more than to deny that their mirror-image hatchet jobs are. They are precisely what many people still mean by biography. Names are not sacred; only actions are good or bad.

Others, I've said, simply see a biography as "a good read" about an actual person, whether praising, knocking or tolerably fair. Wyndham Lewis once said that good biographies are like novels. Certainly the common reader seldom looks for or follows up footnotes; rather he welcomes a coherent, evenly flowing story and a clear portrait of a character. And this kind of biography can exist for different levels of readership, just like novels. Publishers seem to know three broad levels: popular—mostly lives of sportsmen and "show-bizz" celebrities; "middle-brow"—mostly of heads of state, royal families, generals and famous criminals; and "intellectual"—mostly famous statesmen, writers or thinkers.

The next move in the argument is obvious, but I want to put my case minimally and negatively: so long as the difference can be perceived between those aforementioned types of biography and scholarly, academic or definitive—call them what you will—biographies, I don't need to call my sort legitimate biography and the rest bastard; I would only need, if time allowed, to point to some of the crucial differences between them. Biographies whose primary intent is not to tell

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the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth often fulfill some useful, cultural role. But just let us not confuse the categories. I found some sophisticated reviewers who obviously expected that I should either "put the case for Orwell" or "cut him down to size at last," and were not merely disappointed when I didn't, but then accused me of doing the other. Some friends of Orwell said I was attacking him and most of his enemies said I was finding excuses for him, though they all conceded that I provided a vast amount of factual information that might one day be useful to someone else, to save someone of more delicate sensibilities from having to sweat.

At times while taking all criticism seriously, I did feel a bit like the BBC reporting the Northern Ireland and Falklands crises: being hit by both sides at once, I feel that theoretically discredited attempts to be balanced and objective might occasionally more or less have worked. Epistemologically I know that the position is absurd, but practically one cannot help feeling a little bit smug, nailed up there on one's cross when the blood flows down from both cheeks at once.

Yet scholarly biographies have peculiar difficulties. I referred to some of them in my Introduction, so I won't labour the obvious. The novelist has a reasonable control over his or her characters, the plot, the length of chapters and the balance of one part of the narrative against another. But the scholarly biographer in limiting himself to what can be said truthfully, is limited by the availability of the evidence and the reliability of witnesses. And evidence comes in all shapes and sizes and with all kinds of gaps: skill, patience and energy are necessary, but they are useless without luck, and they cannot recreate lost or destroyed papers. The final evidence can look very like that celebrated Irish description of a fishing net, as a series of holes surrounded by string.

Sometimes one has more documentation than is needed or is easy to handle. Sometimes one has, as for the Burma period in Orwell's life, very little direct evidence. Nothing is rational, everything is accident. Orwell's letters to his agent, over almost thirty years, survive; but not his agent's letters to him. Two letters of George's to Sonia, his second wife, survive, and none from her to him. Quite simply in writing a scholarly biography there is no way, without excessive speculation and padding, to ensure any proportionality between the length of chapters and the probable importance of various episodes of someone's life. I was not being foolishly modest or nervously defensive when I said in the Introduction that I could have produced a better book. I am not being modest at all. I am aware that I can write as well as most aca-

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demic biographers and better than nearly all other social scientists. But lumpiness and unevenness are necessarily there, if one's primary commitment is to truth based on evidence rather than to telling a good story based on intuition. Literary facility can prove deadly if it tempts a biographer into lack of respect for the limitations of the evidence available.

Now of course I admit that this is not an all or nothing proposition. I am no advocate of that school of historical biography who dish up documents raw and even uninterrupted on a scale only limited by the resources of university presses and Foundation subsidies, or as Leon Edel said in his "A Manifesto" in the very first issue of *Biography,* "Like crushed cars in a car cemetery." Who are such historians writing for—themselves? Or there is the extreme contrary response as when the writer A. J. A. Symons chose to write the life of a notorious if talented liar, Frederick Rolfe, who moved among men to whom secrecy and duplicity were second nature and where documentation was destroyed, forged or scarce, and all living memory suspect for self-interest: therefore he wrote his *Quest for Corvo* as an account of his quest and of his relationships with the witnesses, as if a novel. Decency let alone the laws of libel closed that door to me.

A biographer who presumes a serious readership, however, must present the evidence, must not merely have footnotes (which literary publishers and typographers hate) but must bind himself or herself to saying nothing of importance that cannot be footnoted. But perhaps if the footnotes are detailed and sometimes long, as when one needs to discuss the reliability of evidence, and if they are tucked away at the back of the book, then the text can be kept reasonably clean and flowing. I certainly tried to keep both scholars in mind and those general readers—if they thought it worth the effort—who wanted the story of George Orwell. So the final result was, of course, as are most things in life, a compromise.

I think that the writer and painter Wyndham Lewis was perverse to suggest that the good biography is like a novel. Some biographies and autobiographies are, but then, while enjoyable, they do have to be taken with as much salt as they have pepper. May I give a rather extreme, absurd but endearingly honest example from an English literary lady's autobiography?

> I owe an apology to those who expect, and are entitled to expect, accuracy, coherence, chronological order. This is not so much narrative as an anthology: selected moments, hand picked. Why burden the book with

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"the long littleness of life" which the reader would only skip, and which I have skipped, for him? On other hand, may I remind him that *toute vérité n'est pas bonne à dire.* I have not lied, I have merely by-passed the truth, whenever unpalatable.

Violet Trefusis does mention Vita Sackville West quite often in her book, but not that they were lovers and eloped together.

I am not saying that popular biography cannot be truthful. Most readers are prepared to believe that dear Mr So and So, who wouldn't know a footnote if he saw one, is telling the truth about the Duke of Edinburgh or about Mrs Onassis; or certainly believe that *they* would get *him* in the Courts if his make-believe was too lurid. But unless the biographer does the hard graft, even *he* is not to know if he is telling the truth or not, and hard graft means a lot more than relying on the memory of people who met one's subject and on the gossip of third parties. Strictly speaking, a truthful popular biography could only be a popular version of an existing scholarly biography, just as all school histories are taken from academic histories. For instance, Mr Peter Lewis's recent popular short life of Orwell is, despite some questionable political judgements (what Orwell should have believed had he not been a socialist), a very reliable and usefully brief distillation of the evidence—only I'm bound to say that I found the remark in his Preface hard to accept that his own work was finished before mine appeared, unless being finished it then started up again. I make no complaint, it is the fate and function of scholarly works to raise the standards of popular journalism.

More seriously, what is biography really about? I deliberately called my work a "Life" of Orwell because, as I argued in the Introduction, "biography" has, since the time of Dr Johnson, come to imply the portrait of a character. The main business of a biographer has often been thought to be that of "getting inside" his subject, "grasping the inwardness," "knowing another person," or "revealing the true personality"—in a word, empathy. And this is why, presumably, Wyndham Lewis would prefer the novelist to the historian as biographer. Now I set out with this common view in mind, which I now hold to be romantic. I'm not wholly sure how I came to change my mind, only that I did as I became impressed with the ambiguity of much of the evidence and even, to make good some well-established readings of Orwell's character, with the need to suppress contrary evidence (i.e., if we cut out Act I, Scene 1, then the ghost can be purely in Hamlet's schizoid mind). Critics are entitled to believe that in justifying an

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external, almost alienated approach, I was rationalising a defeat. Several leading reviews, not merely by old friends of Orwell's, paid great tribute to my energy, industry, sense of period, grasp of history, etcetera, before saying either that I failed to paint a credible character, or that it was not as they remembered. But I'm unrepentant and though sentimentally I would love to have met him—he feels like a lost lover whom I never knew; yet for the stern purposes of biography I see advantages in having no personal memories. For I must say publicly that, while each of these reviewers was able to paint, in a few paragraphs, a more coherent picture of Orwell's character than I was able to do in a quarter of a million words, yet these miniatures were, while all life-like and beautiful, each quite different from the other and each fused with autobiography. I made the same point in the book about the obituaries of George Orwell: fine and noble writing but showing considerable diversity in characterisation.

The point is an epistemological one: in the nature of knowing and being, can we really know *the* character even of people we are very close to, lovers, friends and family, in such a way that we can surmise accurately (as adolescents torture each other) "what are you *really* thinking"? Can we use such "knowledge" of character, such as it is, to entail facts: actually to fill gaps in the record of what she was doing in the many years before she remade our life, still less to be sure what her former motivations were? Yet English biographers, famous for their good judgement of people (which in itself may be a national stereotype, vice or collective delusion) commonly do just that. They follow the great Dr Johnson in his *Lives of the English Poets*—"I knew that poor wretch, Savage": probably he and Savage drank together on two or three occasions. Then they infer a life from a character. If we live with people or meet them often, we can build up a fair knowledge—and abilities differ in this respect—of their likes and dislikes, even of their probable behaviour in response to past and future events. We can become fair judges of each other's probable behaviour, allowing for a good many surprises and misunderstandings. Don't misunderstand me. I am not a behaviourist. These things cannot be measured. Amid necessity there is human freedom. I'm not a behaviourist; but I suspect that most of the people who talk so confidently about the character of George Orwell or anyone else, don't really want to commit themselves to *radical intuitionism*. A radical intuitionist is someone who thinks that you can have direct knowledge of somebody else's motives.

There are many wise and helpful things in Professor Leon Edel's book *Literary Biography* directly based on his experience of writing his

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truly great and monumental biography of Henry James. Yet in my terms he *almost* professes to be a radical intuitionist:

> The biographer is called upon to take the base metals that are his disparate facts and turn them into the gold of human personality, and no chemical process has yet been discovered by which this change can be accomplished. It is a kind of alchemy of the spirit; to succeed the biographer must perform the unusual—and the well-nigh impossible—act of incorporating himself into the experience of another person, even while remaining himself.

I'm glad that in fact he kept his distance. A biography of Henry James written by a Jamesean simulacrum would be almost as weird and overcomplex as an Orwellian biography of Orwell would be falsely simple.

No names, no pack drill, but if I heard once on my trail, I heard a dozen times something like this: "I really didn't know Orwell awfully well; to tell the truth, Professor, we only met over lunch or drinks three or four times by way of business; but somehow, I really cannot explain, very different people you know, but somehow we clicked at once . . ."

When, occasionally, this kind of understanding could be put into words specific enough to say something, all I could do was to put it alongside several other different revelations and puzzle: usually I couldn't count them as evidence at all, only by default did they relate to some specific and problematic event in Orwell's life for which documentation was lacking—why did he go to Burma? Why did he go to Spain? Why did he go to Jura? Why did he want a second marriage so much? Only then did I think it right to trouble the reader, and then only with this frankly quasi-evidence of different opinions. As with Brecht and the art of acting: if people must demand what *the* true interpretation of Hamlet is, I'd rather they, or rather each one of the audience, made up their own minds—differently—rather than the actor and the producer should try definitively to solve the enigma and smooth it all out for them.

I think it possible to give, as far as surviving evidence allows, a reasonably objective and reliable account of how someone led their life. Even then, the evidence may overwhelm one, so of course one makes judgements as to what was important. In Orwell's case I chose (or rather I came to find myself choosing), not very surprisingly, to concentrate on his attempts to write and publish his books—as Marxists and structuralists would say, on his "literary production"—a useful enough phrase, on its own. But I note that if Malcolm Muggeridge

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had carried out his original commission to write a biography of Orwell, it would have been an account of the struggles of a Christian without God to find a cause, just as gentle and well-meaning Sir Richard Rees, who had known Orwell very well, did write a book about Orwell as "almost a saint."

If one must say that biographies are about character rather than about the lives that people led, then at least it is prudent to adopt, as philosophers would say, a soft rather than hard usage of the concept. Consider this dialogue in *Middlemarch* about Lydgate, suspected of crime:

> "... there is no proof in favour of the man outside his own consciousness and assertion."
>
> "Oh how cruel!" said Dorothea, clasping her hands. "And would you not like to be the one person who believed in that man's innocence, if the rest of the world belied him? Besides, there is a man's character beforehand to speak for him."
>
> "But, my dear Mrs. Casaubon," said Mr Farebrother, smiling gently at her ardour, "character is not cut in marble—it is not something solid and unalterable. It is something living and changing . . ."

If I concede that there is "character" in Farebrother's sense, then at least I must remind, in very friendly spirit, four good old friends of Orwell's, who have all said kind things about my work except that I miss his character, that they only knew his "living and changing character" relatively late in his life. And that what he told each of them about his earlier life and states of mind is not conclusive evidence: our own interpretations of the past live and change, one reveals different things about oneself to different people, and if one never lies, as a lady once said to me, one seldom tells the whole truth. And their own readings of his character, not surprisingly, thinking of their own diverse backgrounds, viewpoints and talents, differ. Friends see friends as part of their own lives. Part of how we now see him is through the very diversity of the testimony of all who knew him well, quite as much as in the common ground. I presumed a reader who might actually for once like being left alone with divergent testimony to make up his or her own mind, not offered a solution by some superintelligent and superempathetic biographer. The externalising, the distancing, the alienation-effect, if you like, became deliberate; indeed I now think it the only proper stance for a biographer to take if telling a true tale about a life is the aim, not the presumption of final godlike judgement

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on character or achievement. Too much English biography is an extended version of the Headmaster's report.

Preconceptions about character, even by those who knew the subject well, can actually end up in contradiction to the actual course of the life. Sonia Orwell was genuinely convinced that it was not in his real character to be so political, and that in turning to her he was showing the dominance of his literary over his political self. Leaving aside whether this "politics" versus "literature" is not a false disjunction—he said that above all else he wanted to make "political writing into an art"—and leaving aside any speculations that there might have been other good reasons why a man would turn to Sonia, her view involves what I have called "speculative teleology": what he should have done had he lived differently or longer, the logic of the "real character," not the grossly empirical course of the actual life. Sonia wrote in her Introduction to the *Collected Essays:*

> If political events had made less impact on him, he would have lived in the country, written a book—preferably a novel—once a year, pursued his interest in the essay form and, when money was badly lacking, done straightforward book reviews which, he said, he enjoyed writing. . . . War made him a political activist.

But if she meant the Second World War, he was by then already a political activist; and if she meant the Spanish War, that was a war that he chose to fight in, went out of his way actually to fight in, not simply to visit Spain for conferences like Connolly, Auden and Spender. I'm not quoting this passage simply to show that Sonia was wrong in her judgement of his "character," making it indeed an article of faith among her own friends that she would have saved him for "literature" from "politics"; rather I quote it to show the danger of all such judgements based on the concept of "character." Since she was so clear what his real character was, several important or revealing political essays were discarded from the *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters,* as being inferior, not typical or repetitive.

A "character study" is simply not the same as a "life." Arthur Koestler regretted that I failed in those laborious 473 pages to grasp Orwell's character as well as the aforementioned Mr Peter Lewis in his sprightly picture book (which, incidentally, largely reflected Sonia's view of the true George, though no reviewers noticed this). Perhaps so. I'm only irritated that Koestler failed to notice why I was so explicitly sceptical of the concept of character.

Let my try once more. I have talked to Koestler once at length and

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twice briefly and read most of his English works: from this I could have written a decent character sketch, certainly good enough for a *Times* obituary or an *Observer* profile; but this would be as far from a Life or a biography as Hyperion to a Satyr. A life must be a true account of what somebody actually did. Mr. Iain Hamilton wrote a biography of Koestler in his lifetime in which he did not bother to look for any primary sources whatever for the first thirty-five years of Koestler's life, on the odd grounds that Koestler has himself written autobiographies covering that period. But surely a prime duty of any biographer of a writer is to examine critically the relationship between the writer's own autobiographical writings and what actually happened. The distance between these two things may not discredit the man so much as enhance the writer, and show, incidentally, some of his critics and commentators to be singularly naive in accepting the professional writer's use of the first person as always an attestation of public truth. With Koestler, as with Orwell, scepticism and research are crucial.

Sonia Orwell, as is well known, was very upset both by some of my judgements and by my "putting Orwell in the box," she said, as if it was wrong to doubt the literal truth of anything he wrote in the first person. Such scepticism seemed to me the elementary duty of any scholarly biographer. One of the practical difficulties of modern biography in general is with owners of the copyright in words, especially widows and sisters—women live longer: Nietzsche, Wagner, Kipling, Eliot, Keynes, Orwell, etcetera. To be fair to Sonia Orwell, when she asked me to do the biography, quite out of the blue, not knowing me nor I knowing her, she agreed to my firm condition that as well as complete access to the papers, I should have an absolute and prior waiver of copyright so that I could quote what I like and write what I liked. These were hard terms, even if the only terms on which, I think, a scholar should and can take on a contemporary biography. It was courageous of her to meet them. That she signed such a contract should be a noble example to what she would often racily call "the widows' union."

There are, of course, specific difficulties of contemporary biography. The advantage of having living witnesses is partially balanced by the personal involvement of some of them, particularly if writers themselves, in the reputation of the subject. And also publication itself stimulates both new witnesses and unexpected reactions from old witnesses to the actual text. For instance George Mikes and Andre Deutch, no less, had been sitting on yet another authentic rejection of

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Animal Farm by a leading publisher. I had thought that Reg Groves was long dead, who worked in the bookshop immediately before Orwell and was one of the original "Balham secession," the founding of British Trotskyism. His testimony strengthens the view that Orwell's conversion to socialism was far less sudden than he himself implied. The British anarchists kindly sent me a collective review that added considerably to knowledge of his ambivalence and contacts with them in the *Animal Farm* period. I knew that Orwell's consultant physician at University College Hospital was long dead and all medical records destroyed, so had given up that trail; but I very foolishly forgot that the young houseman does the day to day work, and he wrote to me with important new evidence. Apparently Orwell didn't stand a chance; but they did not tell him nor did they tell Sonia.

Things in Orwell's own writings and life raise three particular difficulties for a biographer. Firstly, he was unusually secretive or perhaps simply private, liking to keep different groups of friends apart, for instance, and yet he let his pen name develop in the *Tribune* days into a public character—"good old George" or "that damned Orwell stirring it again." Secondly, his fame came late, but then came fast—so many famous writers, who only knew him well after the publication of *Animal Farm* (so if well, also relatively briefly), committed themselves to critical judgements in print about him long before it was possible to read his books and essays as a whole; and they also committed themselves to broad statements about his development in the 1920s and 1930s that were not based on first-hand observation. Thirdly, the nature of some of his best writings raise difficult problems of *genre,* are they fact or are they fiction? If one shows fictional elements in "Such, Such Were the Joys," or in "Down and Out in Paris and London," is one to be accused of doubting the word of "the crystal spirit" and destroying his reputation for integrity and honesty, or is one paying tribute to a craftsman less naive than some of his Chelsea and Bloomsbury literary friends of the days of his fame seemed, enthusiastically but patronisingly, to assume? A word on each of these problems.

Orwell valued his privacy greatly and was not given to self-revealing monologues, even to girl friends. Now personally I do not find anything psychologically abnormal about this. I suspect that more people are of that kind than those who must always be telling all to everyone; and certainly when we meet, whether as friends, teachers or as involuntary travelling companions, extreme cases of such talkative people, we commonly suspect that not everything they say is true. Courts often are rightly sceptical about convicting on the basis of unchecked

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confessions. Orwell was simply not that type, and he had no thought, until very close to the end, that he would be a household name throughout the world. To say that he was careless about keeping his papers is pure hindsight, for why should he have had any care? He was not born to the literary purple and while he wanted to live by his novels, he showed no signs of thinking himself a great man or a great writer. Some of the Bloomsbury group, for instance, seem to have secreted papers and excluded letters even before their first works were published in the calm expectation that one day they would be useful to their family biographer. Not so old George. If he became famous with *Animal Farm,* consider that even though he had worked for the BBC and did scripts for them even after *Animal Farm,* including a bad adaptation of *Animal Farm,* yet nobody thought to record his voice. Old BBC hands told me that it would have seemed a comic disproportion then, "old George" was simply one of the boys who had a very lucky break with one book. Disc recordings for the archive were only set up for the very great, like Wells and Shaw, or for people absolutely assured of a permanent place in the history of English letters, like Sir Max Beerbohm and J. B. Priestley. Orwell's privacy was not pathological, it was perfectly normal: however, it makes difficulties for a biographer. But he was not seeking to help a biographer, nor expecting one until the last year of his life when the reception of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* both impressed and worried him. Frankly I do not think that the "Eric Blair/George Orwell" disjunction need trouble one greatly. Even Stansky and Abrahams had dropped it by their second volume: I think the idea of a character change when he adopted the pseudonym was always more a formal excuse that they were not writing about "George Orwell" rather than a genuine and sustained (albeit dubious) psychological hypothesis. Certainly in the *Tribune* columns he produced a kind of ideal image of himself: the plain, blunt, free-speaking man of common sense and common decency, something that I call "Orwell-like" in contrast to what "Orwellian" meant after *Nineteen Eighty-Four.* But this image was an extension of part of himself, not a mask. If he was role-playing a bit, it was with different proportions of genuine aspects of himself. I think of the late Richard Hofstadter's classic essay on Abraham Lincoln: how, while an honest and straightforward man, he quite consciously exploited "Honest Abe" for political effect. Similarly Eric Blair was always George Orwell for literary effect. Julian Symons has put this better than I can: there was no war of two selves, only a continual growth in his powers and range as a writer, and "Orwell" was the writer's name. So compelling did the

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confessions. Orwell was simply not that type, and he had no thought, until very close to the end, that he would be a household name throughout the world. To say that he was careless about keeping his papers is pure hindsight, for why should he have had any care? He was not born to the literary purple and while he wanted to live by his novels, he showed no signs of thinking himself a great man or a great writer. Some of the Bloomsbury group, for instance, seem to have secreted papers and excluded letters even before their first works were published in the calm expectation that one day they would be useful to their family biographer. Not so old George. If he became famous with *Animal Farm,* consider that even though he had worked for the BBC and did scripts for them even after *Animal Farm,* including a bad adaptation of *Animal Farm,* yet nobody thought to record his voice. Old BBC hands told me that it would have seemed a comic disproportion then, "old George" was simply one of the boys who had a very lucky break with one book. Disc recordings for the archive were only set up for the very great, like Wells and Shaw, or for people absolutely assured of a permanent place in the history of English letters, like Sir Max Beerbohm and J. B. Priestley. Orwell's privacy was not pathological, it was perfectly normal: however, it makes difficulties for a biographer. But he was not seeking to help a biographer, nor expecting one until the last year of his life when the reception of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* both impressed and worried him. Frankly I do not think that the "Eric Blair/George Orwell" disjunction need trouble one greatly. Even Stansky and Abrahams had dropped it by their second volume: I think the idea of a character change when he adopted the pseudonym was always more a formal excuse that they were not writing about "George Orwell" rather than a genuine and sustained (albeit dubious) psychological hypothesis. Certainly in the *Tribune* columns he produced a kind of ideal image of himself: the plain, blunt, free-speaking man of common sense and common decency, something that I call "Orwell-like" in contrast to what "Orwellian" meant after *Nineteen Eighty-Four.* But this image was an extension of part of himself, not a mask. If he was role-playing a bit, it was with different proportions of genuine aspects of himself. I think of the late Richard Hofstadter's classic essay on Abraham Lincoln: how, while an honest and straightforward man, he quite consciously exploited "Honest Abe" for political effect. Similarly Eric Blair was always George Orwell for literary effect. Julian Symons has put this better than I can: there was no war of two selves, only a continual growth in his powers and range as a writer, and "Orwell" was the writer's name. So compelling did the

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name become, almost an English institution, that Sonia Brownell, Mrs. Eric Blair, later—for a while—Ms. Pitt-Rivers, perhaps had very little choice but to adopt Mrs. George Orwell in the phone book.

The second problem peculiar to Orwell biography is that since his fame came late, many of those who wrote about him on the basis of personal acquaintance have been less than cautious at times in recalling precisely when it was they first got to know him. Perhaps because the man was so unusually private when writers are necessarily involved in self-publicity, and so irritatingly unwilling to talk about personal things, yet so interesting and provocative, that there was an unusual amount of rather dubious biographical interpretation of him, rather than of literary criticism, right from the first writings. And writers on Orwell have been apt to place great weight on their own diverse memories of him and, even more difficult for a biographer, on their memories of what he said to them about his memories of earlier periods in his life. Much of this evidence was difficult to use. Some people are surprised that I did not repeat in my book important anecdotes they told to me of what he said to them or did. But like a detective, the biographer must always seek corroboration and can never rest a case on hearsay evidence. Rarely do people seek to deceive, even themselves. But is it to some quite an unholy thought that Orwell could have occasionally teased people who either pressed him too hard or ignored him completely by giving them deliberate pieces of misinformation? This biographer must sadly report that he learned to be sceptical of memory unchecked by document or independent witness. I'm sure I've suppressed some revealing incidents that did take place. But, alas, I also discovered that several anecdotes to which people genuinely claim to have been eye-witnesses are in fact found in Orwell's own writings. It is not merely that memory over thirty or forty years commonly matures and grows and occasionally even decays, but that memories of a famous man in his days of obscurity can become badly confused by reading and recalling subsequent writings on him. The past is remembered not just directly, but also filtered through what one subsequently learns. Memories are valuable evidence. But they are not history in themselves. I'm all for aural history so long as people don't think that its authenticity makes it true, that it is history: it is only part of the evidence.

Not merely Cherokee chiefs read books on anthropology before being interviewed by anthropologists, distinguished men of letters can re-read their early essays on Orwell shortly before being interviewed and then recount them with commendable accuracy and beguiling freshness. It is simply very difficult to get through to genuine remem-

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brances or re-remembrances: people defend what they wrote long ago, however incomplete or inaccurate. Imagine trying to ask Proust on the one hand, or Nixon, on the other, "what *really* happened?" Their memories would be self-induced rationalizations. Fred Warburg did not commission Orwell to go to Spain and write *Homage to Catalonia,* though he remembered it vividly in his memoirs, even supplying a dialogue. But then publisher's memoirs are in a class of their own.

The interviewer can only approach contradictions in the evidence, between what people once wrote and what is now known, with great delicacy. People don't like being contradicted in their own homes. And, by the way, thinking of some manuals that are from time to time written for research students, there is no such thing as a "structured interview," or if you impose it, you get very little beyond "yes" or "no." When interviewed most people enjoy talking at large, a discursive conversation takes place. Then one is in the world of an English novel, not in the interrogation cells of Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* or Le Carre's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy.* One or two things that are not already clear from the written record have to wait their turn in a long and patient process of mutual exploration. Just like in bed, those manuals are useless.

People who knew him well and had neither written about him nor been interviewed by the BBC were more rare and in some ways more precious to me, so then it was sometimes worth taking down every word (although normally I found that a verbatim record was not worth the risk of people being resistant to recording). But when every word was taken down, sometimes I discovered afterwards that precisely because Orwell had become such a *popular* writer, that they too, even the non-writers, had memories of Orwell or views about him that could only have been formed by a subsequent reading his works or works about him. His sister, Avril, plainly only glanced at some of his works in his lifetime and did not like them. When I met her twenty years later, she had accepted that her brother's fame was justified, so famous were his friends, had forgiven him, as she saw it, for letting the family down (his resignation from the Imperial Service, his tramping, his socialism, his poverty) and she had become a cultivated and sensitive reader of his works, really worth talking to on many points of literary criticism; it was as if she had given herself an adult education from her brother's books and the commentaries about them. But this searching also contaminated her memories of the past. Fortunately she was interviewed at length by the BBC not long after her brother's death and those transcripts, while far less perceptive about the writer, contain the more authentic memories of the man.

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Again I must point out that it was simply not possible for even critics and scholars to make a proper assessment of Orwell until the so-called *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters* of 1968 appeared; and by then most people had committed themselves and continued to defend entrenched positions. A new edition is now unfolding which should contain interesting and important matter not included in the original four volumes. This will be the chance for fresh critical assessments. The third and last peculiarity of Orwell's biography is the *genre* problem of some of his major works. Crudely, are they fact or fiction? I realised right from the beginning how complex was the relationship between his writings and his life. While the closeness of the relationship was generally appreciated, its complexity was less recognised, despite some clear warnings he himself made. In *The Road to Wigan Pier,* he said of *Down and Out in Paris and London* that "Nearly all the incidents described there actually happened, but they have been rearranged." That is why I have to say again that I cannot agree with Sonia when she said in her introduction to *The Collected Essays* that all his novels except *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* "contain straight descriptions of himself" or that "a whole chapter of *The Road to Wigan Pier* suddenly turns into straight autobiography." The man was straightforward, but the writer was not naive. Each of his autobiographical passages serves some different literary and political purpose. Some of his friends of the brief days of his fame seem to have typecast him as the Douanier Rousseau of English letters, forgetting that he had gone to Eton just as some art critics were to forget that the "primitive, visionary" painter, Stanley Spencer, had been to the Slade School of Art.

So it is not easy to distinguish between the autobiographical "I" and the storyteller's "I". When Penguin books reprinted *Down and Out in Paris and London* during the war, the first printing was in the old orange fiction covers. It was then reprinted in the famous non-fiction blue. Records have vanished. But I have some sympathy with what may have been simply a mistake at a low administrative level. Did all those people who told the author such lurid tales in *Down and Out* really exist? There's no documentary evidence, but in a literary judgement of the text I would have bound the Penguin reissue in a candy stripe of orange and blue. For *The Road to Wigan Pier* there is more evidence, which simply suggests that he did not invent, but that he did rearrange the order of events, touch up, and heighten skilfully and make the timescales involved appear longer than they were (as George Painter said of Proust, "though he invented nothing, he altered every-

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thing")—so a blue cover with an orange surround. For *Homage to Catalonia* there is quite as much evidence as for Wigan and all of it supports the most literal veracity of what he described: true-blue all through. I suppose that since he was writing the book as a polemic against false pictures of the war, he knew he must give his opponents no possible opening to fault him on points of fact.

The sheer difficulty of how to use "Such, Such Were the Joys" as biographical evidence is still painful to me. The need to explore carefully its truth, since so much bad speculation about the genesis of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has been built on it, held up the telling of a story and made the opening both hard to digest and made it contentious. Perhaps I should have simply ignored all those silly and arbitrary, at least infinitely reversible, psuedo-Freudian short cuts, or simply referred them to Richard Ellmann's marvellously sensible chapter on the subject "Literary Biography" in his essays, *Golden Codgers*. Nonetheless, I'm unrepentant about the truth of the matter: if "Such, Such Were the Joys" had ever been printed by Penguin separately, there could well be much blue on the cover, so long as there was a large and dramatic blob of cautionary orange as well. I see it as a polemic against private schooling based on his own experiences, but with fictional supports to widen the attack. Yet somehow the literal truth of it became an article of faith to some. My troubles with Mrs. Orwell began on this score as well as with the usual American publisher to the Orwell estate.

Certainly I and my helpers wasted a lot of time trying to find from the *Rangoon Times* and the *Mandalay Gazette* whether an elephant was shot, and I certainly established from Burma Police manuals that someone in Blair's job would have had no business whatever at a hanging. But this kind of boring research is purely for the narrow purpose of recounting his life. It cannot affect our appreciation of his art. May I quote from David Lodge's essay "A Hanging" in his *The Modes of Modern Writing:*

> When I first read "A Hanging" I certainly assumed it was a true story. The more I studied it, the more I suspected that Orwell had added or altered some details for literary effect, but I did not doubt that the piece was essentially factual and historical. I think this is probably the response of most readers . . .

But he then goes on to relate that Stansky and Abrams in their biography found a lady whom Orwell had told that he never saw a hanging,

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despite subsequently claiming to have done so twice more in print; and I found (unknown to Mr. Lodge) another such lady.

> So there is at least an element of doubt about the eye-witness authenticity of "A Hanging", a possiblity that it is a fiction . . .
>
> It is very unlikely, at this date, that we shall ever be able to establish definitely whether Orwell attended a hanging or not, and more or less impossible that we should ever be able to check the particular circumstances of "A Hanging" against historical fact. It may be completely factual, it may be partly based on experience, or partly on the reported experience of others, or partly fictional, or wholly fictional—though the last possibility seems to me the least likely. The point I wish to make is that it doesn't really matter. As a text, "A Hanging" is self-sufficient, self-authenticating.

Indeed, "it doesn't really matter" from the point of view of his art. It does matter from the point of view of his biography, but even in using a sledgehammer to crack a nut, quite unsuccessfully in this case, the biographer cannot reduce the work of art to some other dimension.

How strange that some have honestly thought that one was diminishing Orwell if one pointed out that some of his essays in the first person are more like short stories than true confessions. His reputation must finally rest on being a writer, not simply as an exceptionally honest and decent human being. And despite his reputation as a writer, in the simple sense that ever so many people read him, some of his old friends, even Sonia Brownell, Cyril Connally and Richard Rees, still felt so uneasy at the content of what he wrote and so dissatisfied with his formal qualities as a novelist that they made too much of the personal virtues rather than the literary craft of the man. Part of his literary craft was his use of his own virtues and, of course, his own experiences, which makes it very difficult to tell fact from fiction—certainly I could not always succeed. But an artist deals in speculative truths whereas a biographer must—as Leon Edel has remarked, citing Desmond MacCarthy—put himself or herself under oath, however much at times that limits a good story.

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LEON EDEL

Essaying Biography

Dear Friends and Colleagues:* For me this is a pleasant and cheerful occasion even if it is—as it must be inevitably—tinged with a sense of completions. *Festschrifts* are curious mixtures of encomium and salutation: their "hail and farewell" refers to a distinctive past, they speak for friendship and various forms of expression, and sometimes in their substance and their gathering-in, they have a touch of the solemnity of terminations. But somehow today I see this occasion as a pleasant video-style "commercial" in behalf of George Simson's elegant monographs which he produces in the margin of his admirable journal, *Biography*. "Essaying" biography sounds to me like one of Gloria Fromm's double-entendres: spoken quickly it might be "assaying." But when we open the vermilion (or are they magenta—I profess I am not good at color nuances) we find (or at least *I* find) essays by old friends assaying—yes, Leon Edel. Most of the essays are by former students now distinguished publishing scholars, critics and biographers. Dr. Fromm, the editor, of the University of Illinois in Chicago, is the biographer of Dorothy Richardson, one of the subjective writers of the Joycean and Proustian time; her biography was one of the earliest and remains one of the most remarkable of "feminist" biographies—Miss Richardson having been a very distinct feminist in her time as well as a novelist.

I should add that Gloria produced this volume with very little help from me. I felt it couldn't be my affair and adopted a hands off policy

*Remarks made by Leon Edel on the publication of a *festschrift* honoring his work in biography by the Biographical Research Center, the University of Hawaii

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—otherwise I would have been telling her all the way how to do it "my way." For it deals with a person whom I know infinitely—the typewriter has just written that word, it is a Freudian slip—I intended to write intimately. There may be a sense of the infinite in this occasion, however.

As you might expect, I find the book engrossing since it contains so many polished essays and says so many intelligent things—about writers, about the past, about biography, about me! Also about dolphins, as you will discover. Also, it contains a list of my writings over half a century and more. This terrified me when I saw the titles assembled in such an orderly way by Gloria's bibliographical students. Did I do all that? I asked myself. Was I so much of a workaholic? Didn't I know when to stop? I should tell you, by the way, that the book was planned for my 75th birthday, but it takes time and patience and so it arrives as I stand on the edge of octogenarianism, which is another way of saying old fogeyism. And, (ah me!) I am still working.

I take delight most of all in the accomplishments of my students. As a teacher I derived endless pleasure encountering young adventurous minds. I learned much participating in their joys and sorrows, their problems, their anxieties—reminders to me of my own younger years: for in this way they are renewing generations which help make us aware of the present when we tend to dwell too much in the past of history and of ourselves. I want to thank all who have contributed to this volume and regret that some of them cannot be here today. As for Professors Fromm and Simson, I can only say they were positively Napoleonic in their sense that nothing is impossible—and with that kind of magic seem to have found the materials, ideas, shape, and not least, money for their venture and their gesture to an old writer who had happened to be also a professor and teacher, and friend.

The *festschrift* contains in addition to Sir Rupert Hart-Davis's greeting to me, papers on my life of James; on that novelist's theory of education; on Virginia Woolf's attitudes toward biography; problems in writing the life of Emerson; backgrounds of a book on the "beat" generation; biographical essays and a discussion by Gavan Daws, the eminent historian, of a remarkable episode in recent Hawaiian—and human—history. I could single any one of the essays in *Essaying Biography* for a commentary, but I am turning to Gavan Daws's because it has particular meaning to my present audience, to those of us who have been involved in the work of the University of Hawaii.

Gavan has put at the head of his essay the words of Henry James, who, toward the end of his life, said: "I reach beyond the laboratory

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brain." I find Daws's essay so moving in its plea for our understanding of the animal kingdom that I want to offer gratuitous advice to George Simson. I want to say to him "forget about Edel in this volume, forget if you can even about biography, take advantage of the public love for nature and for dolphins, for creatures of land and sea, great and small. Daws, in a few illuminating pages has given us a splended and sustained piece on environment. Plug it! Make it the center of advertisement, if you want to sell a lot of copies. You can smuggle the rest of us in under Daws's elegant appeal for a more profound recognition that animals were created to share our world and are a part of it, even as we were created to be shared by them and to grace *their* world." The parity is nowhere more clearly and eloquently pronounced than in the story of Noah; and indeed the parity is recognized in most pages of both the Old and New Testaments.

When James spoke of the laboratory brain, the computer had not yet been invented. It exists now, a kind of slave-brain we have, in our ingenuity, brought into being. It will do almost everything if we wisely program it—be a memory, be an attic, retain all the White House messages in the Iranscam. It can indeed be called a noble, democratic as well as a demonic machine, a silent CIA even, a harbor of wickedness and skullduggery. The only thing it lacks is the imagination which produced it.

Yes, the imagination goes beyond all laboratory brains—for it probes, feels, pulls together, appraises, analyzes, assembles relevancies, makes fragments whole. It is our greatest possession when we learn how to use it. And we must remind ourselves that animals too have their own particularly conditioned ways which we don't always understand by which they fulfill their lives, as we fulfill ours.

Walt Whitman spoke to his imagination at the end of his long life when he wrote his touching poem, "Goodbye, my fancy." He was ailing. He felt a general weakening of range and response, of attention and affect, that comes with old age. Yet at the last, in the poem, he could not say good-bye altogether. Who can? His final line varies from his title, becomes an echo of *ave atque vale* when he writes "Goodbye —and Hail!—to my fancy." Genius resists, even when it reaches the time of greatest vulnerability, the time of the sere and yellow leaf. And it doesn't have to be programmed!

Our imagination and its works endure in ways that go beyond the perishable of life for it still has in the process of aging and change the private and ineluctable fluidity of memory, of dream, or fantasy, or fancy. In giving us the story of the porpoises Rea and Puka, Gavan

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Daws has bestowed upon this book a kind of exquisite end-piece that expresses what we feel when we see the smooth free-floating and water-curving gliding and cavorting mammals of the sea—their infinite sweetness of being, as it seems to us, the apparent *joie de vivre* that animates their days and sometimes ours, even when they and we are swept by the weather changes of cloud and chill and rain and storm in the battle for existence. They give us an appealing effect of having found harmony and equanimity of being. Perhaps they might tell us otherwise, if we could ever learn their language. But since their brains are a bit larger than ours, we must allow that they may learn ours first and might ask us what we mean by the couch and the shrink, bank interest, dividends, and foreclosed mortgages.

Thank you my friends for your goodwill and kindness. Thank you all for your generosities of invention and utterance and for an occasion that contains within it the signs and symbols of the joy and continuation of life.

HONOLULU

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HARRY PAYNE

Edward Gordon Craig: The Revolutionary of the Theatre as Hamlet

INTRODUCTION

In a series of writings and productions from 1900 until the First World War, Edward Gordon Craig proposed nothing short of a total revolution in the design, mounting, and purpose of theatre. Frequently he described the required process as a stripping away of unnecessary accretions to get at the heart of the theatre as an independent artform. This purification would have surprising consequences, for among the things which would have to go would be the actor and actress, the written play, and the representative scene. In its place he proposed a ritual theatre, inspired by the sacred performance theatres of ancient Greece and medieval Europe. The written play would yield to expressive movement. In place of pictorial scenery would be an abstract "Scene" constructed of movable white screens or, ideally, shifting hydraulic columns, played upon by expressive light, preferably from the sun. The actor would first give way to the marionette and the mask, abstract impersonal media, eventually to be superseded by the Übermarionette, the man so wholly in control of self and body as to aspire to the condition of the marionette. The "Artist of the Theatre," a controlling genius who could give total unity to scene and movement, would replace the actor-manager. Coteries of young men (women were not to be part of the sacred theatre) would train under that artist-genius. [For this, and what follows in this section, see "Bibliographical Note."]

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Craig's heritage is peculiar for someone who seemed to want to consign the Victorian stage to a rapid death. He was born at Harpenden in 1872, the illegitimate son of Edward William Godwin, architect and stage-designer, who became well-known for his exact reconstructions of scenes for Shakespeare and Greek tragedy. His mother was Ellen Terry, then in retreat from the stage but who would soon leave Harpenden with her children in 1875, lured back to the theatre by Charles Reade. Ostensibly she wanted to help pay the bills, but clearly the theatre was her proper world. The next year she joined Henry Irving at the Lyceum, and her liaison with Godwin dissolved soon after.

Craig spent the next years in the company of his governesses, his mother and his older sister Edy. At age fourteen he was sent to boarding schools, first in England and then in Germany. His career as a student was checkered, and in 1889 he returned to his mother, the Lyceum, and the tutelage of the great actor-manager Henry Irving. As an actor Craig seems to have been more than competent; his mother would always mourn, with some justice, the actor in him who yielded to the revolutionary Artist of the Theatre. He was able to supplement his smaller parts in the Lyceum with major roles in provincial theatres. As he reached his mid-twenties, however, his ambitions shifted. He mastered the art of the woodcut, introduced to its craft by the "Beggarstaff Brothers," James Pryde and William Nicholson. He managed to produce a little journal called *The Page,* largely written and illustrated by himself under various pseudonyms. There he could indulge in some imaginative and often dark woodcut designs, publish selections from his favorite poet Walt Whitman, and offer decadent musings in the manner of the 1890s.

This period from 1898 to 1903, though, is largely a tale of two collaborations in theatre design and management. With the musician Martin Shaw he founded the Purcell Opera Society, a group of amateur players who performed a series of works: "Dido and Aeneas" (1900); "The Masque of Love" (1901); "Acis and Galatea" (1902). This period represented a move into artistic freedom. His designs were free from the bonds of Victorian stage realism. Costumes were simple, lighting imaginative and evocative, movements patterned and abstract. The performances earned some critical applause but were financially troubled. Still, he moved on. He designed Laurence Housman's nativity play *Bethlehem* (1902), which startled and pleased audiences with its simple, symbolic settings. Then with his mother he formed a company which attempted more elaborate and ambitious productions—Ibsen's *The Vikings* (1903) and Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*

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(1903). But the company failed, in spite of the fame and backing of his mother, and some significant praise for his designs.

Nonetheless, opportunities were open to a scene designer who was staking his claim far enough outside normal bounds to impress a growing number of artists and critics. In 1904 Harry Kessler, a German aristocrat and impresario, invited Craig to mount some productions with Otto Brahm in Germany. Nor was Kessler alone in his interest in Craig. In 1906 Eleanor Duse invited him to help with some productions in Italy. And in 1908 Constantin Stanislavsky invited him to collaborate on a production which eventually became the Moscow *Hamlet* of 1912. Many other offers were forthcoming, but as his fame grew he found it more difficult to work on such projects. There were always apparent obstacles. Practice became increasingly difficult as theory became obsessive. Beginning with his dialogue "The Art of the Theatre" (1905) and then in his journal *The Mask* (begun in 1908 and written largely by Craig under pseudonyms), he announced those visions of the radically transformed theatre to which he committed himself.

He generally withdrew from the public eye, though he continued to experiment with his model scene; to produce a repetitious *Mask;* to establish a short-lived private school for future artists of the theatre at the Arena Goldoni in Florence (1913–14); to found an evanescent journal *The Marionette* (1918–19), devoted to the history and mechanics of puppets; to edit old materials into new books; and to write letters and opinions on the theatre—all repetitions of his original ideas—to hundreds of correspondents, newspapers, and journals. From 1914 until 1966, he largely refused work in a world unwilling to accept his ideas, and mused on the distant future of the theatre which he always claimed to love more than anything in the world. A prolonged Victorian adolescence of preparation, a short Edwardian adulthood of rebellious fruitfulness, and a long eclipse of isolation—such was the peculiar pattern of his career.

Ellen Terry

The biographer's task is, in part, to understand the psychological sources of these ideas and patterns. None of Craig's individual proposals was without precedent, as several studies have shown (e.g. Dorn, Doswald, Loeffler, Olf, Payne, Senelick). But the intensity and clarity of the combination of ideas coalescing in a proposed revolutionary act sets Craig apart. Such will to overthrow the existing order cannot be simply learned in the usual way, and in Craig's case he made it

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clear that his public program was inextricably bound to the necessities of a private drama, centered above all around his mother Ellen Terry and, to a lesser extent, his master Henry Irving.

The tale of Hamlet often—indeed obsessively—provided Craig with the metaphors for his quest. It is telling that in his interpretation of *Hamlet* Craig is unsure of only one character—Hamlet's mother, Queen Gertrude. All other characters are typed in the severest way, but Gertrude is divided—vain, corrupt, seduced, yet capable of love and impeded only by the evil of the world around her. That he thought of his mother in the same terms as he thought of Gertrude we can be confident, for he tells us so in one of the most remarkable memoirs of any son about a mother, *Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self* (1931). By his account Terry pampered her son in early childhood, yet later left him to the care of governesses and then sent him off to boarding schools. Her approach to him was both indulgent and scolding. She was frequently angered by his mistreatment and abandonment of his wife and several lovers. She defended his theatrical experiments and was proud of his genius, but her regret for the actor that was lost thereby missed the whole point of his voyage out of the world of the Lyceum. A mother's love underwrote all she did, though she never seemed to have found a way to understand and deal with her "Teddy" (Terry, Prideaux).

Craig's feeling oscillated over a much wider range. Characteristically he felt compelled to bring the secret into the open because of the actions of another man, George Bernard Shaw. When Shaw's correspondence with Ellen Terry was published in 1931, he saw displayed before the public the actress he despised in long intercourse with a man he equally despised. His answer was to claim her for himself in a most peculiar and divided act of love. The premise of *Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self* (and later repeated in many passages of *Index to the Story of My Days*) is that there was a loving, caring, nurturing, homebody mother "Nelly" fighting for supremacy with the actress "Ellen Terry" whom everyone knew. Craig imagines a dialogue between these two forces within the body of the mother. The pattern is sometimes confused; Craig had trouble sustaining a clear dichotomy. The victor in life seems mostly to be Ellen Terry, the actress. The victor in Craig's drama, though only in death, was her inner, hidden essence "Nelly":

> She died in the morning sun, which shone warm and yellow onto her. She sat up suddenly—opened her eyes—fell back and threw off fifty old

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> years as she fell. She became twenty-five to look at—and in truth, she became once more Nelly Terry, back again at Harpenden with little Edy and little Teddy and the one she loved better than all the world. (*Ellen Terry,* 197)

The living mother has sorely disappointed his wishes. In death "Teddy" Craig was reclaiming a mother whom the world had seduced from him.

The "Nelly" of the book was real enough, though Craig knew her only intermittently. Clearly his fondest memories were of the days when his mother had left the stage to live with Godwin—"the one she loved better than all the world"—and raise her children. Nelly was, then, for Craig the perfect mother and perfectly at one with herself. He described the daily rounds of mothering as a comforting rhythm of life. As opposed to "E.T." his real mother "Nelly" relied not on words but on gentle, nurturing acts of waking, washing, and feeding (*Ellen Terry,* 67). The mothering of "Nelly," therefore, like his future theatre, relied not on words but on silent, expressive rhythms.

Even when Nelly gave way to Ellen Terry, there were still parts of life that brought back these feelings of peace and harmony with Nelly. Craig could remember fondly the patterns of the evening meal, his place at the table, the rhythms of serving. So too, when he joined his mother in the company, he could recall the day's rounds, the repetitions which underlay the hectic activity of life in the Lyceum. There were still other moments when he was with his mother in ways that brought back the child's pleasures. Craig describes the carriage rides to the Lyceum as a delightful private ritual passage through familiar streets and sights, "in a magic boat for two." He goes on to describe how quiet and uninterrupted the ride could be at those times: "It was a delicious drive with mother down to the Lyceum; it was a bit drowsy and altogether lulled one into a dream" (*Ellen Terry,* 86–87).

Even in recounting this idyll, however, Craig is aware that there was always trouble in paradise, even as "Ellen Terry" always dwelled within "Nelly." His mother belonged to Irving. As he recounts, he rarely could enter the Lyceum by the same door as his mother—that was reserved for his mother and Irving. He was consigned, as he noted elsewhere, to the "P" (for "Prompter") side of Lyceum. Mother and Irving dwelled "O.P." ("Opposite Prompter") in another world (*Ellen Terry,* 101–02). He once described a visit to that world, which he found to be a disquieting world of mirrors. People of the theatre, he says, are always checking themselves in a mirror in their dressing rooms. When they converse, they do so to mirror images. Such were

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his conversations with his mother once at the Lyceum (*Ellen Terry,* 106–07).

For the cruel fact to Craig was that the halcyon days at Harpenden were short-lived, ending when "Teddy" was only three. Though he occasionally went back there to see the home he loved, he was expelled early from there to the world of the London stage, never to return. However much of "Nelly" was the essence of the woman, as Craig argued, there was a tragic flaw, which he put quite bluntly: "E.T. was always getting in the way of mother. . . ." (*Ellen Terry,* 63). In the end, *Ellen Terry and her Secret Self* is therefore a bill of indictment within an act of love. For the crimes of Terry seemed primal and many. The "E.T." of the book is restless, constantly bustling about, either preparing for performance or preparing for sleep. She is vain, easily led away by men—G. F. Watts (her first husband), Godwin, Reade, Charles Kelley (her second husband), Irving, Shaw, James Carew (her third husband, four years younger than Craig)—all the while failing in her liaison with his father. She plays favorites, preferring the sensible Edy to the dreamer Teddy. She is a careless mother: "I don't see how you can rock the cradle, rule the world, *and* play Ophelia perfectly, all in a day's work" (52). She is a slave to genius, and genius is a principle of restlessness: "Genius is forever changing its rhythm, goes nowhere, and *is* something, in distinction to *doing* something" (24). She fails to give him guidance. She leaves him without a father to train him, and there were no masters at the Lyceum really to teach him. When he showed talent for acting, she sent him off to school (*Index* 32, 79).

Craig was most vivid in his rage against that side of his mother in these later writings, but they are not fabrications of old age. Indeed, both in his private Daybooks and in *The Mask,* from the period 1908–1914, similar themes ring clear. We have already seen the problem of Nelly and Ellen Terry in his version of Gertrude. So too, we see them in his public and private tirades about the role of women in the theatre during those years. In a Daybook entry, he describes how his attitude toward women had been indelibly marked by "the uppermost influence," his mother. First of all, his mother was ideal, so he had a habit of idealizing all women, only then to be disappointed.

> For there was something in all the women which somehow or other did not quite harmonize with the headlong belief which I was prepared to give. Later on I found out that my mother was herself only thinking of an ideal—her ideal. And now to each new woman who attracts me I long to unveil my thought—to beg her to unveil hers—not to cover it with

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falsehood which she has supplied ever since the demand arose (Daybooks, I, 21 Jan. 1909).

Soon after he talks about mothering and its failures. "All children," he writes, "should be brought up by the man through the woman." When women disobey, the daughters suffer. He insists the "male children" do not suffer. But the price seems high: "They are cut adrift & in time find a new family—" (Daybooks, I, 21 Feb. 1909). At that time Craig was dreaming of a new family—his cohort of male artists of the theatre at the Arena Goldoni—but he certainly had yet to find it. Soon after his anger and disappointment become even clearer, in a tirade against women who fail to supply full love. This he associates both with mothering and sexual pliancy: "Whichever way women are taken they fail to a great extent except as mothers & here only a small percentage reach any high standard. If this were not true we should have many more great men than we have." Women fail, though, to supply what men really need: "Hence the whore" (Daybooks, I, 8 June 1909).

Nor were his thoughts on his mother entirely consigned to the private world of his Daybooks. Craig had great difficulty separating private and public thoughts. Indeed we can see much of the germ of *Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self* two decades earlier in *The Mask.* There he reviewed Ellen Terry's memoirs. He described them as "charming" but "entirely valueless." For Craig the book failed to give guidance for "the boy or girl who is struggling to know how to do or how not to do, who is perplexed to know if to keep on with the work or give up altogether." She supplies "amusing anecdotes" rather than wisdom, and reveals "the narrowness" that gives young men "the imperative need of escaping from the stage world, from the artificiality of the atmosphere" (*Mask* 1 [1908]: 104–05). He reviewed the book again, correcting passages which spoke ill of him, expressing suspicion that some other hand (probably Shaw's) was at work in it. And here he began again to split his mother. If we were allowed to hear the "real" woman, we would have a book that was "humane," "courageous," and "generous." (*Mask,* 1 [1908]: 180–81).

Not long after, he developed the divided vision of his mother even more fully under the guise of a review of a play in which Ellen Terry played a fairy creature. The theme of the review is "once a fairy always a fairy." He describes how once this particular fairy withdrew from the fairyland of the theatre to rear children at a scene in the country, a thin guise for Harpenden. There she learns about "washing days and babies' underclothes" and the idyllic world of rural retreat. Still she is

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seduced back to the ugly world of the stage: "Back to fairyland, commanded Ellen Terry, and back to Fairy Land we all trooped, and a very delightful time we had there." Now she is back on stage, "whispering her message of beauty to the world, scattering her elfin gift, . . ." (*Mask* 2 [1909], 3–5; cf. *Theatre Advancing,* 220–21).

Edwin Godwin and Henry Irving

In Craig's reconstruction of his life the role of Ellen Terry was, therefore, central. His father Edwin Godwin and his master Henry Irving figure less decisively. Indeed Craig frequently expressed regret that no man ever quite filled his need for a dominating figure at Ellen Terry's side—an elder Hamlet to her Gertrude.

Godwin looms as the great lost opportunity in Craig's life. Craig never openly blamed Godwin for the separation from Ellen Terry; he was more inclined to fault his mother's decision to return to the theatre as the sin which cast them out from Harpenden. Indeed he would bridle at the suggestion that his father was in any way a deserter. He also did Godwin the service of reprinting in *The Mask* several of his father's essays on the scene-design of Shakespeare's plays. To devote such space to one of the greatest proponents of realistic, archaeologically exact set-design in *The Mask,* a great *machine de guerre* against realism, was an act of unusual filial obedience. In that Craig saw no incongruence. Godwin had, he claimed, said that accessories and costume should be either "altogether right or wholly wrong." Godwin's having done things "altogether right," Craig argued, now opened the path for "purely imaginative forms," that is, doing things "wholly wrong." He reproduced Godwin's writings, therefore, as "the natural realistic link between the unimaginative and the imaginative" (*Mask,* 3 [1910]: 53–56).

Still, Godwin belonged to that history of the theatre which Craig sought to overcome. However perfect his scenic creations, it was unclear whether Craig's art of the theatre had anything to learn from Godwin's art (*Mask* 3 [1910]: 78). And Godwin, for whatever reason, had indeed left before he taught Craig what to be and how to be it. Craig saw his eventual turn from acting to total design as a form of rediscovery of his father's blood, but a rediscovery done the hard way. He speaks late in life of the "impediment" which retarded his development:

> The "impediment" came from the union and separation of E.T. and E.W.G. For my father might—would—have taught me what I had to dis-

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> cover myself. The "impediment" was in my bones, in my blood, which cried out vaguely that an artist is . . . well, not what an actor is. The vague cry acted as a brake on me, but did not satisfy until 1907 I saw and heard clearly for myself. Fourteen years it took, and a mighty lot of blunders. . . . (*Index,* 152).

For all of Godwin's virtues and purported innocence, therfore, he was part of an impediment which made life difficult—that failure to nurture and guide of which Ellen and Godwin were the principal (but not the only) guilty parties.

The actor Charles Kelley came and left, married to Ellen Terry in 1877, separated in 1880. He stayed long enough temporarily to fill the void of male presence Craig often evokes in later life, but not long enough to teach Craig what he wanted to know (*Index,* 29, 31, 36, 48–9, 66). It was left to Ellen Terry's leading man, Irving, to become the "master" in Craig's life. That came rather late, for after some appearances as a child in the Lyceum company, Craig was sent off to various schools—another hiatus which Craig blamed for defects in his development. Once Craig returned in 1889, Irving dominated the scene as a kind and helpful, but also forbidding presence.

Irving was not a father, but he was "kind as a father," perhaps because he "knew what it might feel like having no father" (*Index,* 47). From Irving, Craig truly learned, though at a distance. Craig's memories of Irving emphasize both his nobility of soul and his towering psychological force. He once described Irving as possessed of "expressionless stone nobility" (Daybooks I, 22 Jan. 1909). In an article in praise of Irving's character and art, Craig professed admiration fraught with a sense of awe and distance. After fifteen years with Irving, he professed to know Irving no more or less than a boy in the gallery, as a figure both kindly and noble but also "enigmatical, mysterious" (*Mask,* 1 [1908]: 174).

Still, Irving was that person on whom Craig could call as the prototype of the male master he wanted in art and in life. In late accounts of his life he often mentions the lack of a father and the lack of masters. He expressed admiration for all those who could really dominate the scene, such as Napoleon, Rhodes, and Mussolini (e.g. *Mask* 10 [1924]: 51; *Theatre Advancing,* 81; *Books and Theatre,* 21). Nor were these reflections on the need for personal and social authority merely for public consumption. The testimony of the Daybooks is the same, saluting acts of authority in politics (e.g. II, 29 Aug. 1910, and III, 15 Nov. 1914). In these private ruminations he also pondered his need for authorities in the theatre and his failure to find such: "I know what the

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Art of the Theatre is not . . . / Then why waste more time in the fog / Now I must learn what it is—*I need masters* / Where are they?" He reviewed the masters who dominated so many fields but he concluded that the theatre held "no such men / It is ignominy." (Daybooks, I, 20 Sep. 1909).

Despair about the world's failure to nurture the artist of the theatre colored Craig's vision of the world. He was convinced, though, that he found the prototype of the Übermarionette in Irving, whom he came to view as the triumph of cadence, both in voice and movement, over dramatic gesture and recitation. That same capacity for distance yet nobility, which Craig perceived as the triumph over emotion on and off stage, was the key to the next era of marionettes.

This is the theme of Craig's late work on *Henry Irving* (1930), but it can be found earlier in his private musings: In January 1909, he wrote how Irving had shown by example "the pattern leading to the great art of motion. Ecco! this is a man to love" (Daybook I, 15 Jan. 1909). In a notebook entry, which contains his deepest accounts of the religious revelation which interfused his work in the years just after 1907, he speaks of the drab era without heroes in which he had been cast. But at the Lyceum, he says, he saw heroic figures. Above all, unidentified but still clear, loomed Irving:

> One figure especially stood out in such a light in those days—changing from sorrow to gaity but always in the grand manner—The face of this figure—in the eyes of this face—Age would suggest to me that it were best one took sights & sounds of this world with a good pinch of scepticism—laughing lightly & gaily at it—why? I would not have stopped to ask why in those days. I stop now—But I hear no reply. There is no reply. ("Notebook on Movement").

On other occasions, though, Craig found he could conjure up Irving's ghost. At the end of *Henry Irving,* Craig concocts a dialogue between himself and Irving. Irving dominates the scene, and Craig is reduced to childlike interlocutor. Yet the ghost works for Craig's purposes. The topic of the dialogue is largely George Bernard Shaw—as we have seen an obsession for Craig for reasons both aesthetic and personal (though Craig would not have seen the difference). Here Irving urges Shaw's obliteration from the written record, as agent of all that is corrupt and trivial within the modern theatre. Craig is happy to be the disciple of such teaching. Of Craig's work Irving professes to have heard good things, though he seems largely ignorant of what it is about. Craig expresses humility, and before the dialogue can move to

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Craig's vision and possible leadership of the theatre, the cock crows (*Henry Irving,* 229–32).

The dialogue is rich in its symbolism of Craig's relationship to Irving. Irving is made to do Craig's work, providing authority for his hatred of Shaw. Indeed, Craig was always making Irving's ghost do his work. By his constant insistence that Irving was the prototype of the Übermarionette, he provided legitimacy to what might appear an outrageous act of rebellion. Just as, by peculiar dialectic, Craig quoted Godwin to justify his suppression of Godwin's art, he did the same with Irving. Irving perfected the late-Victorian stage, all the while providing the design for its abolition. Craig splits Irving in death as he did his mother: "If any one died—was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, it was Brodribb [Irving's given name]—for Henry Irving, that shadow of coming event, the Übermarionette, is still living" (*Henry Irving,* 39). Hence, Craig insisted, Irving was the agent of his own overcoming. Irving, in Craig's account, "gathered to him all the old English traditions," displayed "what was left" after rejecting the useless, and then exploited it "further than it had ever gone before." "Then," Craig claimed, "he blew it up!" (*Henry Irving,* 17). Irving would doubtless have been most surprised at this characterization. To be sure he was a master of cadence and he did help show how a single authority could dominate a production. Still, Craig's admiration of Irving justifiably might well have struck him as curiously narcissistic and decidedly double-edged.

The Revolutionary as Hamlet

Such was the private drama he saw in his approach to a new theatre. His mother had betrayed her calling as "Nellie" to return to the Victorian theatre, so "Teddy" would destroy it. His biological father Godwin had deserted him and made his theatrical fortune as an apostle of archaeological realism, so he would abolish such scenery in the name of the abstract "Scene." His would-be master Irving had inspired him by his cadence, but that master had remained distant from him and had uttered thousands of words, many of endearment, to the hated other self of "Nellie," Ellen Terry. Hence he would seize the love of cadence and rhythm from Irving, reject the rest of what the Lyceum represented, and then serve a new theatre as its presiding genius, all the while nurturing a cohort of new male artists in a way that had not been done for him.

His art was, therefore, an act of private rage played out creatively on the public stage. Like many who undertake such a psychological strat-

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egy, he needed an all-encompassing metaphor to justify, organize, and explain his actions to himself and the world. He found that metaphor in *Hamlet*.

As Craig reflected on his career and his role in the theatre, he found in Hamlet the archetype of his experience. He had acted the role in 1896 and witnessed productions of it in the Lyceum, with Irving and Terry in the leads. He worked for four years on the Moscow production of *Hamlet* and, independent of any production, obsessively sketched designs for the play. No doubt the most striking work of design of his later years is the Cranach Press edition of *Hamlet*, planned from before the War, though not published until 1929. He was, in a word, Hamlet-obsessed. As he saw it, "Hamlet is the story of the theatre" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet;* see also Senelick, Innes ch. 6). *Hamlet* could be the story of the theatre only if Craig presumed the license to rethink it that way. As we have seen, he had early pronounced the primacy of the all-powerful artist of the theatre over the poet. He therefore insisted that this artist had the right to rethink the written play to give it harmony and unity. In his speculations, notebooks, and mounting for the Moscow *Hamlet* Craig offered just such a radical rethinking. Gone was the psychologically complex Hamlet which populated the London stage during the Shakespeare revival after 1880. In his place stood Hamlet as saint and martyr, the impresario totally in control of the action who willingly orchestrates the death of many and the sacrifice of self in order to bring rest and purity to a corrupt and vain world.

Hamlet was, as Craig described him, a saint with a license to kill (*Mask* 7 [1915]: 114). In Craig's mystical formulation, Hamlet orchestrates a triumph of Fire, Imagination, Beauty, Justice, and Spiritual Law over Water, Actuality, Ugliness, Illegality, and Temporal Law (Cahier . . . *Hamlet*). He is "Not Weak," Craig noted in his notebook: "He acts as he does through nobility of soul—through love—not through weakness & who shall find fault. Even in his continual doubts he is strong—must be calm—not weep—or rage—He wears the smiling mask of the Greek ideal—All round its face it is calm & only the eyes are shining with apprehension & vision" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet*). Later in that director's notebook he again insisted on the perfection of Hamlet's strength; he is "wise, active & as powerful a man as ever lived" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet*).

There can therefore be no peace between Craig's Hamlet and the absolute corruption which surrounds him. He rules the action in a double sense. He orchestrates all events to their climax, and we see all

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events only through his eyes. He is always present, and his thoughts guide us. No matter how small he may seem, he controls the action. He controls Elsinore, as Craig wanted to control his own scene. Hence, in two sketches of a scene for Hamlet, Craig places the very small form in spaces which threaten to overwhelm him. Yet Craig insists he will dominate the scene, though at enormous sacrifice (*Towards,* 33).

The figures which surround Craig's Hamlet are largely one-dimensional types and, excepting the players and the figure of death, they are all types of evil. Claudius is the incarnation of corruption. Gertrude is fat and vain. Polonius is the prating moralist and critic. Even Ophelia, always played for sympathy in Victorian London, is a "silly little fool neither woman nor suffragette" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. II, 2).

Hamlet loves the players because they are his agents, performing the pantomime which prepares his triumph. Indeed, even as Craig began to reject the actual production of *Hamlet* as a predestined failure, he still looked to the dumb show of the players as a *tour de force* of theatre. The players were to be "the second real *force* in the play." The play-within-the-play was ultimately where Craig and Hamlet rested their hopes: "In this Play in the Play we must catch a *glimpse* of what the Greater Theatre *might be* if money Tyranny & Intrigue did not prevent such a possibility. This must be the most perfect work of art imaginable. The Real Theatre, wise . . . deeds. The Foolish Theatre words." (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. III, 2). When Craig cut silhouette figures of the players, he imbued them with a vivacity that he denied to all other figures, including Hamlet (*Hamlet;* opp. III, 1). They represent a principle of vitality, properly controlled and harmonized by the will of the *Übermensch* Hamlet, embattled Prince and artist of the theatre.

Ironically, the other figure of force in Craig's *Hamlet* rite is the figure of Death, a "Sunlike" figure which haunts the scene during Hamlet's soliloquy on suicide in Act III. The poetry of Shakespeare is made subsidiary to a *pas de deux* with Death, heard as music and seen as a radiant marionette. Death is "calling him away and out of it all" according to Craig's stage notes, and "Hamlet is puzzled and pleased." As the soliloquy proceeds, the "golden figure of death" speaks in music which "bubbles up like a fountain between the sentences." The figure of death is repulsed. The music laughs like a "boy who sees the sea" when Hamlet talks of the "undiscover'd country," and "sighs—sighs—sighs—" when Hamlet repulses her. All the while "the shaddows [sic] of the fates behind and above him now begin to close in on

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him & bend over him" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. III, 1). Hamlet's fate is then sealed by his own will; Death is postponed but still to be served by Hamlet's Christ-like self-sacrifice. The tragedy is transformed into a divine comedy of the theatre. Near the end of the action Craig expects a feeling of triumph, not despair, to prevail. He tries to visualize the effect in his notebook: "In the audience the feeling must be that all is gone *well*—that the catastrophe is near and that Deliverance is with it. Ecstacy in audience by Ecstacy in *acting* scene & voice" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. V, 2).

Craig could visualize the ecstasy only so long as *Hamlet* remained a drama in his own mind. He anticipated failure in his notes, even before the production took place, as he and Stanislavsky worked—sometimes goodnaturedly, sometimes not—at cross-purposes (Senelick). He reverted to the opinion of some that Shakespeare is perfect as poetry, sullied by performance: "It is wrong to act these plays/In the worst of taste" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. I, 5). He would later even insist that he worked on the Moscow *Hamlet* just to prove his theory that Shakespearean plays do not "naturally belong to our art of the theatre," setting up an "unnatural tussle" ("Catalogue").

He was convinced, though, that the role of Hamlet could be acted in life with a purity that could not be realized on stage. In his last set of memoirs, *Index to the Story of My Days* (1957), he developed the Hamlet theme in his life often and at great length. He insisted that he was, like Hamlet, one of the "Impossibles." Hamlet just did not fit: he "lacks technique and advancement"; he "thinks aloud"; he "suspects foul play"; he "sees ghosts" and "hears voices." In general he shows very bad taste and lacks "court technique." And he tends to do nothing, unlike the "first-class" and "efficient" Claudius. People just go around pitying Claudius for having a "weakminded stepson (the very Prince of Denmark) everlastingly yapping at his heels." For Craig, the "Impossibles of 1900" were like nothing so much as Hamlet, and the world was like nothing so much as Elsinore (*Index,* 247–48).

This identification was not merely metaphoric, nor was it a concoction of later life. When one looks into his early correspondence or the director's book for the Moscow *Hamlet,* one finds the most remarkable concatenation of technical speculation and personal identification. He quite literally thought of *Hamlet* as the history of the theatre, and he had grown to assume that he rested at the focal point of the theatre's future. Hamlet's history also bore a striking analogy to his own personal history. As he recalled in the *Index to the Story of My Days* (1957), it seemed that the melancholy Prince and he "had been

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together for a long and long before that." "Hamlet almost seemed to be myself. . . ," he continued. The character of Gertrude and Ellen Terry seemed inseparable: ". . . this Hamlet . . . when I acted him I remember how much I loved my mother—I mean Queen Gertrude . . . but why was she so cross?" And the mystery of his missing father seemed also to draw him to the fate of Hamlet: "I exaggerated these things then and supposed my stepfather might well have poisoned him in his orchard at Harpenden as he slept. . . .I needed him—and he came only in darkest visions—I sat ashamed, alone—ashamed of what?" (162–64).

The animism and the strangeness, then, of Craig's marginalia on *Hamlet* for the Moscow production bear witness to a personal identification which was deep and pursued with increasing literalness. The confusion of his mother and Gertrude in his later memoir runs through his notes on Gertrude in his production notebook. At first he expresses absolute scorn for her, as a fat and lazy person who likes to flop on couches. Later this is mollified into concern: "She is capable of being much warmer. And only the presence of the King sitting beside her makes her speak to Hamlet with insincere coldness." Still later he has Gertrude softening and even speculates, far outside the text, that her drink of the poisoned cup is a suicide (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. II, 2; III, 4; IV, 7). Hence there is nothing unusual in the curious markings "I.D." beside many of Ophelia's lines in the scene where Hamlet orders her to a nunnery (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. III, 1). For Ophelia –whom Craig insisted should be portrayed as unsympathetically as possible—was for Craig the archetype of Isadora Duncan, a recent lover whom he now scorned.

His vision of Hamlet, therefore, was a vision of himself as destroyer and reformer, exacting revenge for the sins of his mother, father, and master. For him, the question of Hamlet's madness was not one of technical interpretation or reinterpretation of a literary text. It was a question of the corruption of the world and the fate of those who would reform it altogether. "IS HAMLET *MAD—IS THE WORLD* KNAVISH!" he wrote in his most excited hand. Then, probably in a later entry, calm comes over his speculation: "No Hamlet is not mad. But the world may not be honest. The world says it loves Hamlet yet calls him mad—Why—Why because having admitted its love for this leader it will have to admit other things afterwards. Unless it can squeeze out of the difficulty some way—it whispers then that those things which it cannot accept are trifling lunacies in his *'noble nature'* " (Cahier . . . *Hamlet,* opp. IV, 2). In earlier notes on the play as a whole, Craig wondered whether Hamlet ought to have taken on the

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enterprise in the first place: "Hamlet should have gone out of the court one fine day & created an ideal kingdom of one" (Cahier . . . *Hamlet*). Hamlet could not; he was locked in the text forever. Craig could, and after a fashion, he did.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For a summary of Craig's idea of a renewed ritual theatre, see Payne. The best standard biography is the work of Craig's son Edward. The most significant studies of his practice as an artist of the theatre are those of Innes, Fiebach, Senelick, Loeffler, and Marotti. Other useful and more specialized studies are those of Bablet, Brook, Eliot, Olf, and Rood. This study expands on notions first briefly ventured in Payne (438–44). Senelick also briefly analyzes Craig's psychological relationship to *Hamlet* (24–26).

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KAYE FREDERICKS

The Annual *Biography* Survey: Our Contributors and Subscribers on Reviewing

The growing art of scholarly reviewing seems to be reaching a wider audience every year, and improving in quality. The quickly-written, snooty, journalistic style that Virginia Woolf referred to in the 1939 Hogarth Sixpenny Pamphlet called *Reviewing* is being replaced with longer, more thoughtful, and more helpful reviews. The pain demonstrated by Woolf's comment, "It is true that the lice are so many today and they bite so innumerably that the author is comparatively immune from their poison" is not inflicted with the same carelessness today because readers tend to evaluate the reviewer right along with the book being reviewed. We wanted to survey our subscribers and contributors —who include readers of reviews about biography, writers of reviews about biography, and authors of biographies being reviewed—to find out what they think about reviews.

In early May we asked three hundred subscribers (one hundred individuals by name and two hundred libraries and institutions) to respond to our survey. Twenty-four individuals and four representatives of libraries responded to the following three questions:

1) What prompts you to read a review about a biographical work?
2) What outstanding reviews about biographical works did you read during the past year?
3) What reviews did you write this year?

To allow for open discussion, we have quoted without attribution and, instead, listed the names of the contributors at the end. We think Virginia Woolf would have been more comfortable with the attitude of

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people involved with review writing today. Through the survey we learned the following.

I. What Prompted People to Read Reviews?

Respondents for the most part said that they read reviews for a variety of reasons, but the reason listed the most often was to learn something new. Some wanted to learn more about a subject which they themselves had written on while others wanted to learn about a subject outside of their own field:

"I teach a course in biography, so I tend to read all reviews related to this subject. Since I teach American history, I concentrate on American subjects. The period is a problem—mine is Early National, but modern biography is a 19th–20th century phenomenon; thus my course—& my reading—concentrates on the 19th and 20th centuries."

* * *

"I read reviews along with other matters because I enjoy reading (candy wrappers to faddish deconstructionists). A quick glance at my reading habits indicates that I read reviews in *Biography, Southern Humanities Review, South Atlantic Review, College English,* the *Newsletter* of the Marlowe Society of America, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly, PMLA,* Phi Beta Kappa *News, Newsweek, Atlantic Monthly,* several newspapers, and various periodicals in the library, depending upon the research I'm doing (for example, an interest in Southern writers, such as the Southwestern humorists, led me to various nineteenth-century reviews). I would assume that these periodicals and sources somehow reflect my tastes and interests (biography, Shakespeare, literary criticism, rhetoric, politics, etc.). Hence, in answer to your question, I read 'for a combination of reasons.' (For example, I read reviews that may offer information on books I may wish to pass on to my children, relatives, grandchildren, etc.)"

* * *

"I am interested in biography and autobiography as part of a long research project. Consequently, when I see a review of a biographical work, I am interested in learning as much as I can about the individual that the brief review might contain. And if the individual fits in with the group that I am studying, I then want to know more. Of course, the interest and excellence of the review is important, but this is really a secondary consideration."

* * *

"I regularly subscribe to *TLS, London Review of Books, NYRB, NY Times, New Republic, Isis* and *Biography.* I read reviews by the subject (not the reviewer) and this includes lives of Darwin, Freud, Marx, Joyce, Proust, famous psychiatrists, scientists, writers, and military men, also individuals involved in history of sex. If I am especially interested in the subject I try to retain the review, filing it, or putting it in a book. If I get the reviewed book I put the review in it. Book reviews are a major way that I try to keep informed."

* * *

"I read reviews primarily because I am interested in the subject and also a special period (18th century, for example). Rarely do I read one for the reviewer, although I

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am always interested to know who the reviewer is and I have been pleased that *TLS* a few years ago introduced signed reviews."

* * *

"Primarily, I think the subject, though either a particular period or a particular reviewer may be of sufficient interest to lead me to read the review. One tends to follow certain subjects, almost as a matter of course."

* * *

"Chiefly the author of the book, and the subject matter next."

* * *

"Usually because of a combination of reasons—typically because of the subject and/or the period, or because something suggests that the book may have something interesting to say about methods/theories of life writing. I would scarcely ever read a review because of the reviewer."

* * *

"My enthusiasm for biography grew out of my love of history, which is essentially concerned with the progress and interpersonal relationships of mankind and the reverberating effects of one person's creativity, wisdom, foolhardiness or whatever. Inevitably certain subjects are of more interest than others. But one also reads reviews of biographical works to understand historical contexts, political and social ramifications to elucidate the activities of a person or group of people."

* * *

"Of course, it is usually on account of a combination of reasons. Because of the more or less enforced specialization of academic life, I now find myself wanting to read things *outside* of my field. For me, that usually means reading in English or European history. Or, like a lot of historians in the 1980s, I find myself reading anthropology."

* * *

"I generally at least look at a review of a biography related to English and American literature and culture. I pay special attention to works related to the 20th century. I recognize certain biographers' names, but this does not mean I will read the entire review. I am most interested in reading reviews of figures about whom I would otherwise know little or nothing. The trend toward recovering historical figures who did not necessarily write the Great American Novel, but who were connected to important people, places and events, is exciting. I am more likely to read a review of such a biography."

* * *

"As a career-biographer I glance at, take-in, or closely read anything pertaining to biography and am inevitably interested in finding out about all new biographies published and how they are reviewed."

* * *

"Either the subject or the specific explanation used by the author. Does the biography shed a new interpretation? Does it contain new evidence?"

Some of those polled said that they read reviews by chance or because they read thoroughly what they subscribed to, or because of style or technique.

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"A combination: access (often serendipity), subject, reviewer in that order."

* * *

"Generally because of the subject (e.g., major woman author) or out of personal curiosity about a famous or historical figure (e.g., Laurence Olivier, Isadora Duncan.)"

* * *

"Often because of the subject, but more often because I happen to stumble across it. I subscribe to 10 or so literary quarterlies and keep them in the Necessary House and by the bed. I manage to read most of what appears. In short I read the reviews because they are published in the journals to which I subscribe: *Sewanee Review, Virginia Quarterly Review, Georgia Review, American Scholar, Southern Review,* etc. I ought to add I subscribe to no newspaper and never have. I read almost no academic journals; most would bore the behind off an elephant."

* * *

"The subject ranks first, in that I may read only the opening paragraph of a review or a book about a person of tangential interest but a good reviewer and a well-written review will draw me to the end."

* * *

"I read reviews of biography and autobiography because of the subject, occasionally because of the reviewer, and sometimes (in the case of popular as-told-to works) because of the literary style of the review. Sometimes a totally trashy work is interesting to read about if treated with appropriate venom in a review."

* * *

"A combination of reasons: the subject is probably most important, but period and reviewer also figure. Sometimes there is a particular slant or connection which intrigues, too. Sometimes the particular method of the biographer is important."

* * *

"I read reviews of biographies for a variety of reasons, subjects, reviewer and technique. For example, I have read reviews because of psychological factors involved: [why did the biographer choose his subject, then write it as he did, and why did the reviewer react as he did?]"

Some people read reviews because of professional requirements:

"Interest in the subject and the period, occasionally interest in the writer if the writer is particularly well known as a biographer, e.g., Leon Edel on Henry James and something like that. Also my job as humanities bibliographer in a university library occasionally requires me to look up reviews of new biographies in order to determine whether the library should acquire them."

* * *

"Because I read hundreds of reviews each month I must value those that are concise."

* * *

"Generally, because of the subject and period. The users of our academic library are constantly looking for books about historical figures and their place in history."

* * *

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"I read reviews because, as the book selector for several departments, I use reviews to guide my purchases. Your journal's reviews are interesting and provocative. . . . I especially appreciate the occasional reviews of non-U.S. presses. Those are really helpful to me."

II. Which Reviews on Biography, Autobiography, and Works About Biography Were Named as Outstanding?

The specific reviews cited were the following, a *verbatim* list:

Boritt, Gabor S., "Looking for Lincoln in the 1980s," *NY Times,* February 8, 1987.
Brown, Jon., *Velazquez, NY Times,* August 10, 1986.
Donoghue, D., "What Makes Life Worth Writing," *NY Times,* March 29, 1987.
Gay, Peter, on "Lives of Freud," *TLS,* October 3, 1986.
Gilbert, Martin, *Churchill, 1941–45* in *London Rev.,* May 1987.
Goodwin, Doris Kearns, biographies of "Fitzgeralds & Kennedys," *New Republic,* March 16, 1987.
Kaplan, Justin, "In Pursuit of the Ultimate Fiction," *NY Times,* April 19, 1987.
Link, Michael, "Peeping into Biographies," *NY Times,* May 10, 1987.
Mallon, T., *A Book of One's Own.*
(Review of) David Novarr's *The Lines of Life: Theories of Biographies, 1880–1970* (mentioned twice).
Nelson, Donald, rev. *Introspection in Biography,* ed. Baron & Pletsch, *Journal of Psychohistory,* Fall 1986.
(Review of) Stephen Oates (ed.) *Biography as High Adventure.*
Peyser, Joan, biography of Leonard Bernstein, *NY Times,* May 10, 1987.
Sheed, Wilfred, in the *NYTBR* on Mary McCarthy's autobiography.
(Review of) Jas. Veninga (ed.), *The Biographer's Gift.*
Webster, Grant, on Ira Bruce Nadel's *Biography: Fiction, Fact and Form,* in *Biography.*
Woodward, C. Vann, on Garrow's life of Martin Luther King, Jr., *NYRB,* January 15, 1987.
(Review of) William Zinsser (ed.) *Extraordinary Lives.*

As noted, a few respondents listed specific reviews, but most people polled seemed surprised to learn that they couldn't recall any, even though they were long-time review readers. "Can't give specific details" and "None stand out" were typical answers given, by eighteen respondents. What biographers, review writers and review readers did want to talk about, however, was what they liked in a review, what made a review worth reading, and where good reviews are found.

"I have read so many I can't give you any cogent account of individual reviews. But the overall impression remains that reviewers do not discuss the biography; they discuss the lives of the persons involved. No genuine consideration of form, of the shaping and telling is offered."

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"I read sporadically rather than consistently in *TLS, NYTBR, Book World (The Washington Post)* and *The Washington Book Review.* I have an accumulation, to be organized someday, of reviews and articles pertaining to biography. I consider the review by Zachary Leader in *TLS* 3 Jan 1986 the best review of my biography of Otto Rank (*Acts of Will,* 1985).

* * *

"I think reviews are particularly worthwhile if they're elegant in style and if they get beyond the individual life in question to discuss the larger, perhaps philosophical issues that either the life or the writing of the life raise, as well as issues in the art of life-writing in general. The reviewer needs to understand the art of autobiography or biography writing as well as to understand the issues (and controversies, dilemmas, etc. in the subject's life) in order to write an insightful review."

* * *

". . . the reviews which I enjoy most are those in which the writer rides a hobby-horse. I like to watch personality and style at work."

* * *

". . . I tend to read reviews of biographies published in the *Women's Review of Books* and the *Washington Post Book World.* These reviews are consistently intelligent, insightful, and well-written."

* * *

"I think a review is successful if it gives an insight into the subject's character and idiosyncrasies, hints at some of his major dilemmas and suggests reasons for his successes and failures, indicates something about his personal relationships. An assessment of the biographer's craft, style and conclusions is also pertinent."

* * *

"No particular review stands out in my mind at this time (no reflection on the quality of reviews intended). However, I find that I seek out, based on my intellectual priorities, abstracts of books and articles (I prefer to hear the writer's voice and to gain his perception of what he intended to do), annotated bibliographies, surveys of the year's work or recent scholarship."

* * *

"I generally enjoy reviews of biographies by John Bayley, P. N. Furbank, Lord Annan, V. S. Pritchett. Among Americans I particularly like Phyllis Rose's reviews."

* * *

". . . I do read the serious studies of biography and autobiography that appear out of the genre of literature. I have attempted to learn more about the issues raised by the authors in a number of reviews."

* * *

"I read too many to remember any particular reviews. I do appreciate those which give a brief summary of the author's thesis and a carefully analyzed critique of the work's strong and weak points."

* * *

"Sometimes a flawed review such as Harold Bloom's diatribe against David Donald in the *New York Times Book Review* raises important issues. His anger made me curious

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about the book itself *(Look Homeward: A Life of Thomas Wolfe).* I wanted to read it so that I could evaluate it for myself. I didn't end by agreeing with Bloom, but I could well see why he reacted the way he did. Thomas Wolfe was infuriating, but I have respect for Donald's tool."

* * *

"There are none that partiuclarly stand out. (I want to add, however, that the review articles I have read in your journal were most interesting. Keep up the good work.)"

* * *

"Generally the best are those published in *TLS.*"

* * *

"[I read reviews] in *New Yorker* and *N. Y. Review of Books.*"

* * *

"This is a more difficult question to answer than was last year's concerning the best recent biographies. Generally the reviews in *TLS, NY Times, American Scholar,* etc. are better than those in local newspapers. Perhaps reviews in Britain are likely to be more severe that those in the USA. One of the most scholarly writers in America once said to me that anticipating a review in *TLS* was 'devastating.' (Of course I read reviews in *Biography.*)"

* * *

"I tend to concentrate on the *Australian Book Review* because of relevance to my own research, the weekend metropolitan dailies for enjoyment . . . , and the British *Guardian Weekly* to keep up with the tip of the iceberg elsewhere. The latter is more literate and to the point. Irregularly I read the *New York Review of Books* and *Times Literary Supplement.* The reviews in *Biography* itself are usually earnest and utilitarian—and there are never enough of them."

* * *

"Any chance you might put the ISBN number in the review?"

* * *

"I think I should mention here that this year I finally got around to reading Natalie Davis's book on Martin Guerre. It was wonderful. I try to follow this stuff written in your own journal, which I think is high quality, as well as *The New York Review of Books.*"

* * *

"Although I have read and noted numerous current reviews in journals such as *Biography, The Guardian* and various historical and literary journals, I am presently working in the 1900–1940 period, so have quite a backlog to catch up with."

III. Reviews Written by the Respondents

Thirteen of the people who responded to the survey had written reviews this past year. They listed reviews in *Australian Book Review; Australian Journal of Politics and History; Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian; Biography; College Composition and Rhetoric; College English; The Georgia Historical Quarterly; Journal of Connecticut History;*

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The Journal of Southern History; Meanjin; New York Times Book Review; The Philadelphia Inquirer; Politics; and *The Washington Book Review.*

Some respondents listed the specific names of biographies they had reviewed while others listed the subject. In alphabetical order by subject, with the specific title when it is known, they are the following: the Breckinridges; *Casey;* Willa Cather; *The Darwinian Heritage; Dreiser-Mencken Letters; Frederic Eggleston; The Hornes: An American Family; William James: His Life and Thought; The Many Lives of Otto J. Kahn; Weldon Kees and the Midcentury Generation; Melanie Klein: Her World and Her Work;* Hugh Lagare; *William Marshall: The Flower of Chilvalry; Nancy Mitford; The Art and Life of Georgia O'Keeffe;* Joan Rivers, *Enter Talking; The Prodigy: A Biography of William Sidis;* Kate Simon, *A Wider World; Jonathan Swift; the Ordeal of Elizabeth Vaughn: A Wartime Diary of the Philippines; Wran; Ascent to Power: Wran and the Media;* and "writers around Romney Marsh in England's southeast coast."

And one person gave a complete explanation:

"I wrote a few, but as usual I can't remember what they were. I don't keep records of what I review; I don't keep copies of my writing either. I have a book of my familiar essays coming out this summer—sort of autobiographical writing—and for the life of me I could not tell you what is in the book. I have just completed another book and could tell you something about that, at least I could tell you now. Sorry not to give you things intellectual, but reading is related more to chance than intellect."

Comments on the survey itself are as follows:

"Sorry we cannot complete your questionnaire. We obtain *Biography* in order to abstract its articles in our *America: History and Life* and our *Historical Abstracts,* and we would abstract a review only if it were a "review article" (i.e., if it contributed substantially to information on the subject.)"

* * *

"I think that the surveys of last year and the year before are more interesting to other readers of biography than is this one. However, perhaps it was worth trying out."

And, finally, under this section, I want to pass along, as a fitting conclusion to these comments about reviewing, a paragragh from an essay supplied by one of our respondents.

* * *

"Observations on the specific book will usually include a restatement of the author's purpose or theme and the methods by which he develops this purpose; the reviewer may include a brief biographical sketch of the intellectual life of the author, linking the present book to the author's previous books and general background; moreover,

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the reviewer frequently provides, from his own thought and experience, relationships that may exist among the author, the book being reviewed, and similar literature; finally, the reviewer offers an evaluation, based on the previous statements in part, of the value of the book in terms of whether or not the book is original, competent, significant, accurate, and soundly executed. In general this evaluation provides a guide to the readers of the review. However, since the policy of many book-reviews editors excludes reviews of books of poor quality, most published reviews represent either mixed evaluations or recommendations."

From Wilson Currin Snipes, "Book Review," in his
Writer & Audience: Forms of Non-Fiction Prose
(Holt, Rinehart & Winston: 1970), p. 169.

RESPONDENTS

ANONYMOUS (7)
WENDY BIRMAN
LYNN Z. BLOOM
RALPH COLP, JR.
COLIN DUNKELD
LEON EDEL
D. E. FITCH
HARRIET GAY
E. JAMES LIEBERMAN
LIU HAI-MING
WILLIAM MCBRIEN
ELIZABETH MCCUTCHEON
FREEMAN W. MEYER
MARCIA J. PANKAKE
SAMUEL PICKERING, JR.
BURTON RAFFEL
JOCELYN SHEPPARD
CRAIG SIMPSON
WILSON SNIPES
JAMES WALKER
DONALD J. WINSLOW
ANNE M. WYATT-BROWN

HONOLULU

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PHYLLIS E. WACHTER

Bibliography of Works about Life-Writing for the Mid-1980s[1]

"Our time is a time for crossing barriers, for erasing old categories —for probing around" (McLuhan).

In the global village of the 1980s, a new breed of pioneers has emerged. These life-cosmographers can be found amidst the uncharted outlands of archival record, primary material, and the human consciousness. Often they are amateur antiquarians documenting the personal histories of little known families' westward migrations. Frequently they are literary scholars re-examining the life-writings of notable 18th and 19th-century authors. Sometimes they are behavioral researchers exploring the autobiographic memories of anonymous subjects. They are cultural historians reconstructing pathways which link past with present, theoretical critics cutting across the borders which separate so-called factual reality from the fictive imagination, and bibliographers retrieving computerized data which unites diverse cultures and disciplines of study. Occasionally they are even "celebiographers" who condone inaccuracy, muckraking, and sensationalism while exposing the addictions and indiscretions of latter day sinners and saints. This hagiographer's nightmare notwithstanding, there are virtually no delimitations to the expansive frontiers which are now open to them—the international community of life-writing practitioners.

[1]Continuation of the bibliographies which appeared in *Biography* 8.4 (1985): 353–55 and 9.4 (1986): 347–57.

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DISSERTATIONS (COMPLETED BETWEEN 1984 and 1987)

Bartnik, Ronald J. "Autobiographical Fiction: The Fusion of Art and Life in Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*." *DAI* 47 (1987): 3426A. Kent State U. Adopts the concept of "autobiographical fiction" in order to describe those works that fall between traditional works of autobiography that establish an author's "identity" and works of fiction that convey "meaning" for an author.

Blitz, Michael D. "The I's Eye: Speculations on the Autobiographical View." *DAI* 47 (1987): 3420A. State U. of New York. Addresses the problem of clearly establishing the perspective or point of view embodied in the "I" of an autobiographical text.

Braxton, Joanne M. "Autobiography by Black American Women: A Tradition within a Tradition." *DAI* 47 (1986): 1785A. Yale U. Identifies the autobiography of Black American women as a tradition as well as aspires to provide a genuine sense of the meaning of individual "autobiographical acts" in their historical, cultural, and environmental contexts.

Burdett, Susan. "From Memory to Imagination: From a Poetics of Memory to a Poetics of the Imagination." *DAI* 46 (1986): 1946A. U. of Calif. Discusses how novelists were influenced by the poetics of the imagination to incorporate them into experimental autobiographical novels.

Cashdan, Sonya H. " 'A Hint of the Fang': Virginia Woolf's Personal Portraits of Women." *DAI* 46 (1986): 3172A. Texas A&M U. Compelled to record her perceptions of truth, Woolf recorded many of her impressions in diaries, letters, and memoirs which were not intended for publication.

Chinosole. "Black Autobiographical Writing: A Comparative Approach." *DAI* 47 (1987): 2573A. U. of Oregon. Analysis of Black autobiographical writing as a form that best accommodates individual portrayals while serving as a collective community portrayal.

Chooi, Frank K. "A Psychobiographical Approach to Interpreting Hagiography: An Exploratory Case Study of St. Francis of Assisi." *DAI* 46 (1985): 691B. Graduate Theological Union and U. of Calif. Shows a need for both an understanding of hagiographical literature and an alternative approach to interpreting the lives of saints that could be revered as credible, exemplary figures of the Church.

Demirturk, Emine L. "The Female Identity in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Immigrant Women's Autobiographies." *DAI* 47 (1987): 2584A. U. of Iowa. Explores the ways immigrant women autobiographers redefine their gender-identities.

Dugas, Kristine A. "Literary Journals: Explorations in a Private Literary Form." *DAI* 45 (1984): 1406A. Cornell U. Explores private journal writing as a literary genre to show the full range of the genre's formal complexity as a confidential, fragmentary, exploratory, and unrevised form.

Everts, Janet M. "Testing a Literary Critical Hermeneutic: An Exegesis of the Autobiographical Passages in Paul's Epistles." *DAI* 47 (1986): 563A. Duke U. Demonstrates that the primary reference of Paul's autobiographical epistles is not to historical events, but to the world of the gospel which has shaped his experience.

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Giannotti, Thomas J. "A Language of Silence: Writing the Self in Yeats and Synge, Joyce, and Beckett." *DAI* 46 (1986): 3725A. U. of Calif. Explores the concepts of a language of silence which answers questions of form and discourse in the tradition of modern Irish autobiography.

Harper, Margaret M. "The Aristocracy of Art and the Autobiographical Fiction of James Joyce and Thomas Wolfe." *DAI* 47 (1986): 1723A. U. of North Carolina. Shows how autobiographical subject matter is essential to the form and function of novels of writers such as Joyce and Wolfe.

Harris, Paul W. "Missionaries, Martyrs, and Modernizers: Autobiography and Reform Thought in American Protestant Missions (Volumes I and II)." *DAI* 47 (1986): 951A. U. of Michigan. Argues that since the ideal of self-denial in service to Christ was central to missionaries' self-image and to their expectations of converts, the autobiographical writings of Protestant missionaries played an important role in promoting the missionary enterprise with the American public.

Heath, J. " 'Autobiography' and Novel in the Work of Simone de Beauvoir." *DAI* 47 (1986): 2708C. U. of Essex, UK. Deals with the question of genre and in particular "autobiography" and its possible difference from the novel.

Henderson, Heather A. "Types of the Self: Autobiography and Biblical Narrative in the Victorian Era." *DAI* 47 (1987): 2595A. Columbia U. Asserts that although typologically-patterned autobiography was taken less seriously during the 19th century, the Biblical forms served as models for different kinds of conversion autobiographies.

Hoberman, Ruth S. "Biography in England between the Wars: Modernist Literary Strategies." *DAI* 47 (1986): 911A. Columbia U. Discusses the three types of modernist biographers: the novelistic, the mediated, and the psycho/social.

Holland, Endesha I. "The Autobiography of a Parader without a Permit." *DAI* 47 (1986): 2206A. U. of Minnesota. Author documents her life experiences of growing up black and female in the American South and then explores the autobiographies of selected Southern-born African-American female activists from 1862 to the present.

Kiskis, Michael J. "Purpose and Pattern in Mark Twain's Autobiography." *DAI* 47 (1986): 1325A. State U. of New York. Asserts that Twain's autobiography may not present a clear and accurate account of his actual experiences, but that it does present a clear and honest picture of the stages of his creative life.

Kostakis, Maida S. "A Hermeneutic Account of the Biographical Attitude in Art Education: Toward a Meaningful Experience for Children with American Paintings." *DAI* 47 (1986): 762A. Pa. State U. Attempts to prove that contact with the life history of an artist provides a vehicle which leads youngsters towards meaningful experiences with American paintings as works of art.

Lancaster, Juliana S. "Experimental Investigations of the Organization of Memory for Events." *DAI* 46 (1986): 3247B. Emory U. Suggests that events in autobiographical memory are organized simultaneously in memory by multiple features such as activity, participant, location, and time.

Marcus, Marvin H. "Mori Ōgai and Biography as a Literary Genre in Japan (Volumes I and II)." *DAI* 47 (1986): 2164A. U. of Michigan. Surveys biography in Japanese literary history followed by an examination of the serialization format and the crucial role of the first-person biographer-narrator.

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Marincola, John M. "Autobiographical Statements in the Greek and Roman Historians." *DAI* 46 (1986): 1929A. Brown U. Collects and analyzes the explicit autobiographical statements which the Greek and Roman historians make in the course of their histories.

McMillan, Lex O. "C. S. Lewis as Spiritual Autobiographer: A Study in the Sacramental Imagination." *DAI* 47 (1986): 913A. U. of Notre Dame. Described as one of the most inventive spiritual autobiographers, Lewis redefines and reverses some of the major assumptions about the relations between subjective experience and objective truth that are associated with the evolution of the spiritual autobiography in modern times.

McPherson, Dolly A. "Order out of Chaos: The Autobiographical Works of Maya Angelou." *DAI* 47 (1987): 2627A. U. of Iowa. States that autobiography has enabled Blacks to share their views, to leave a record of their struggles, to inspire future generations, and to portray the individual life as an embodiment of the larger experience of Black American life.

Myers, Kathleen A. "Becoming a Nun in Seventeenth Century Mexico: An Edition of the Spiritual Autobiography of María de San Joseph (Volume I)." *DAI* 47 (1986): 1743A. Brown U. The use of religious rhetoric and hagiographical narrative in the subgenre of spiritual autobiography.

Netchinsky, Jill A. "Engendering a Cuban Literature: Nineteenth-Century Anti-slavery Narrative (Manzano, Suárez y Romero, Gómez dē Avellaneda, A. Zambrana)." *DAI* 47 (1987): 3057A. Yale U. Demonstrates how an autobiographical narrative can emerge as a kind of ur-text that mediates between the slave experience and the white novelists' discourse.

Novak, Marian H. "Saints' Lives and Legends and Their Influence on Early English and Continental Literature." *DAI* 47 (1986): 1723A. Washington State U. Study of the use of saints' lives and legends as sources of allusions for medieval English and continental literature, specifically the romance.

Opoku-Agyemang, E. Kwadwo. "The Wisdom of the Eye: A Theory of African Autobiography." *DAI* 47 (1987): 3034A. York U., Canada. Identifies the structural basis of African autobiography in which the attraction is to be found in the uniqueness of each eye, the embedded vision.

Perry, Dennis R. "Autobiographical Structures in Seventeenth-Century Puritan Histories." *DAI* 47 (1986): 2161A. U. of Wisconsin. Posits that 17th-century Puritan histories became virtual autobiographies of the composite self and can be distinguished as oratorical, poetic, or dramatic.

Peters, Gerald N. "The Poetics of Conversion: Salvation and Self-Justification in the Modern Autobiographical Novel." *DAI* 47 (1987): 3421A. U. of Illinois. Proves that conversions are prevalent in secular autobiographies and may well be an integral part of the structure and goals of the genre itself.

Pointer, Barbara R. "Claudie: An Interpretive Life History of a Folk Comedian." *DAI* 47 (1986): 1792A. U. of Calif. Offers an interpretive life history of a folk comedian to show what insight the individual artist's background provides into his motivation to create.

Popkin, Susan M. "The Aesthetics of Narrative Self-Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Fiction, Biography, and History: A Study of the Narrator and the Reader." *DAI* 47 (1986): 1337A. New York U. Demonstrates how narration through conversion unifies text, how speakers and readers develop as dramatis personae, and how self-consciousness is bound to the very idea of narration.

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Robinson, Danny L. " 'An Image of an Image': The Shape of Hawthorne Biography, 1840–1904." *DAI* 47 (1986): 182A. Duke U. Traces the growth of Hawthorne biography and concludes that the portraits vary so widely that they say less about the subject and more about the subjective nature of biography itself.

Sanjek, David L. "The Humiliation of Memory: A Study of William Dean Howells' Autobiographical Prose." *DAI* 46 (1986): 3036A. Washington U. Suggests that Howells wrote his autobiographies in order to construct an identity that satisfied him in a way his life could not.

Saunders, James R. "Greater 'Truth' in Fiction: A Study of Four Black Writers." *DAI* 47 (1986): 2161A. U. of Michigan. Suggests an autobiographer has other motives besides mere recapitulation of the truth and that we learn through the fiction a great deal more about individual writers than is revealed in either autobiography or biography.

Seibert, Margaret M. "A Biography of Victorine-Louise Meurent and Her Role in the Art of Edouard Manet (Volumes I and II)." *DAI* 47 (1987): 2776A. Ohio State U. Describes how Manet's paintings record a woman's rise from the street to grisette, lorette, and courtesan.

Tylenda, Barbara. "A Longitudinal Investigation of Earliest Childhood Memories: With Special Reference to State and Trait Influences." *DAI* 46 (1986): 4032B. Southern Illinois U. Explores to what extent the affect, content, and "theme" of the memory will be consistent over time and will vary as a function of an individual's current mood state.

Winderl, Carl A. "A Creative Process That Produces an Autobiographical Novel: An Aesthetic Historical Study." *DAI* 47 (1987): 3043A. New York U. The author creates a sample autobiographical novel to point out how biography or historical fiction provides a link to reality and substantiates existence in a way that the traditional fictional novel cannot.

Yang, James Min-Ching. "Emerson as a Biographer." *DAI* 46 (1986): 2695A. Indiana U. According to this study, Emerson believes that history exists only through biographies and that other minds are "mirrors before ourselves to learn the deepest secret of our capacity."

PERIODICALS, ARTICLES, AND REVIEWS

a/b Auto/Biography Studies. Vol. 2 (1986). The editors have recently announced the creation of The Autobiography Society.

Baker, Russell. "Biographical Boredom." *New York Times Magazine* 30 Nov. 1986: 24. Comical reflections on the unauthorized celebiography.

Barclay, Craig R. and Henry M. Wellman. "Accuracies and Inaccuracies in Autobiographical Memories." *Journal of Memory and Language* February 1986: 93–103. Uses autobiographical records of adults to systematically assess the accuracy and inaccuracy of memory over time.

Biography: an Interdisciplinary Quarterly. Vol. 9 (1986). Articles published in 1986 are listed in the Index in this issue.

Bloom, Lynn Z. "Life Studies: Interpreting Autobiography." *College English* March 1987:345–52. Review essay indicates that the prevailing view of modern autobiography is that there is definitely a fictional component to life-writing.

Braxton, Joanne M. "Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl:* The Re-Definition of the Slave Narrative Genre." *The Massachusetts Review* 27.2 (1986):

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379–87. According to Braxton, "from a gynocritical or gynocentric perspective, *Incidents* arrives at the very heart and root of Afra-American autobiographical writing."

Buchanan, James M. and Robert P. Tollison. "A Theory of Truth in Autobiography." *Kyklos* 39 (1986): 507–17. Buchanan not only contends that the degree of "truth" reflected in autobiography depends on the factually observable biography of a person or the historical narrative of a life, but he also differentiates between what he describes as the observed, autobiographical, and true persons.

Caine, Barbara. "Family History as Women's History: The Sisters of Beatrice Webb." *Feminist Studies* 12.2 (1986): 295–319. The tragedy of individual family members often reveals the tensions, problems, and crisis points inherent in particular and more generalized familial structures.

Carner, Gary. "A Bibliography of Jazz and Blues Biographical Literature." *Black American Literature Forum* 20.1–2 (1986): 161–202. Comprehensive bibliography of jazz life-writing or what Carner describes as the first "freestanding" compilation of its kind.

Cash, William F. "What They Really Wrote About G. B. S.: Shaw and Pearson's 'Retreat to Moscow'." *Journal of Modern Literature* July 1986:211–24. Discussion of how Shaw frequently intervened in his biographers' drafts as a kind of "uninvited collaborator" so as to compromise the objectivity of their assessments of him.

Coe, Richard N. "Poetry and the Child-Self: Lyric and Epic in the Autobiographical Mode." *Neohelicon* 7.2 (1985): 47–93. Whereas prose may be the proper medium of "adult" autobiography, Coe asserts that poetry is possibly better-suited to the re-creation of "the elusive truth of the child-Self."

Cole, Thomas R. and Terri Premo. "The Pilgrimage of Joel Andrews: Aging in the Autobiography of a Yankee Farmer." *International Journal of Aging and Human Development* 24.2 (1987): 79–85. Cole suggests that autobiographical writing can offer a vast resource for the historical phenomenology of aging.

Cunningham, Lawrence. "Hagiography and Imagination." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 28.1 (1985): 79–87. Cunningham suggests that the old hagiographical tradition has and will continue to supply imaginative fuels for the modern novelist.

Foster, Frances Smith. "Adding Color and Contour to Early American Self-Portraitures: Autobiographical Writings of Afro-American Women." *Conjuring: Black Women, Fiction, and Literary Tradition.* Eds. Marjorie Pryse and Hortense J. Spillers. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985. 25–38. Foster believes that since most Black women's autobiographical studies tend to limit their focus to the Southern slave experience, she is inclined to investigate the autobiographical works written by free Black women of the early 19th century.

Gagnier, Regenia. "Social Atoms: Working-Class Autobiography, Subjectivity, and Gender." *Victorian Studies* 30.3 (1987): 335–63. Indicates the variety of forms and rhetorical functions of working-class autobiographies to show the ways in which they alter the autobiographical genre.

Garrett, George. "Literary Biography in Our Time." *The Sewanee Review* July 1984: 495–505. Discusses the pitfalls of writing modern day literary biography and surveys the works of several successful practitioners of that subgenre.

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Geiger, Susan N. G. "Women's Life Histories: Method and Content." *Signs* 11.2 (1986): 334–51. Provides a comprehensive examination of women's life histories as primary sources of feminist research.

Ghosh, Srabashi. " 'Birds in a Cage': Changes in Bengali Social Life as Recorded in Autobiographies by Women." *Economic and Political Weekly* 25 October 1986:88–96. Shows how Bengali autobiographies can add to our understanding of the process of social change which has so far been overlooked by conventional history.

Gibson, Donald. "Richard Wright's *Black Boy* and the Trauma of Autobiographical Rebirth." *Callaloo* 9.3 (1986): 492–98. The ways in which the creative imagination can alter a writer's self-perception so that he or she emphasizes and organizes subject matter much differently than the literary biographer.

Gilbert, Martin. "Rewards of the Search for Churchill: Angry Dukes and Golden Eggs." *New York Times Book Review* 14 December 1986:13. The problems of evaluating enormous amounts of primary material in order to assess the lives of prominent public figures.

Godwin, Gail. "The Uses of Autobiography." *The Writer* March 1987:7–9, 22. According to Godwin, "Our lives shape our fiction just as much as our fiction gives shape to our lives."

Grosskurth, Phyllis. "Search and Psyche: The Writing of Biography." *English Studies in Canada* June 1985:145–56. Grosskurth describes the circuitous and oftentimes precarious routes in the making of a biographer and in the making of biographies.

Grossman, Anita Susan. "Art Versus Truth in Autobiography: The Case of Lillian Hellman." *Clio* 14.3 (1985): 289–308. Discussion of the intermingling of fact and fiction in contemporary autobiography.

———. "The Hidden Isaac Bashevis Singer: *Lost in America* and the Problem of Veracity." *Twentieth Century Literature* 30.1 (1984): 30–45. A study of Singer's "fiction set against a background of truth" or his "contributions to an autobiography" he never intended to write.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd. "Second Thoughts: On Writing a Feminist Biography." *Feminist Studies* 13.1 (1987): 19–37. Often good biography writing does not merely depend on recording objective facts and raw data but on making subjective connections and assessments.

Handel, Amos. "Personal Theories About the Life-Span Development of One's Self in Autobiographical Self-Presentations of Adults." *Human Development* 30.2 (1987): 83–98. Study which probes how autobiographical data can provide a source of information about the complexity of people's continued and changing self-perceptions.

Harlow, Barbara. "From the Women's Prison: Third World Women's Narratives of Prison." *Feminist Studies* 12.3 (1986): 501–24. Surveys the combination of fictional forms and documentaries in autobiographically-inspired Third World prison narratives which defy gender, race, and ethnicity.

Hassam, Andrew. "True Novel or Autobiography? The Case of B. S. Johnson's *Trawl.*" *Prose Studies* May 1986:62–72. Seeing the similarities between the novel and autobiography in a text which defies simple classification.

Holroyd, Michael. "Shaw and Biography: The Unwritten Life." *Essays by Divers Hands* 43 (1984): 90–105. The case of the 19th-century man of letters who

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calls for a new type of truth-telling in biography, but who believes that "truth is never fit for publication."

Honan, Park. "Beyond Sartre, Vercors, and Bernard Crick: Theory and Form in Literary Biographies." *New Literary History* 16.3 (1985): 638–51. According to Honan, an intimacy with evidence coupled with the freedom of interpretive comment makes for vital biography.

Humanities June 1984. An issue of the National Endowment for the Humanities bimonthly review that focuses on biography.

International Journal of Oral History February 1987. Entire issue focuses on the relationships between oral sources and the ways they can be used to document lives.

Jong, Erica. "The Life We Live and the Life We Write." *New York Times Book Review* 10 Feb. 1985:26. According to Jong, the " 'myself' is at least partly a fiction" just as "the autobiographical unraveling" is a created thing or a work of art.

Kamen, Gloria. "Writing Biographies for Children." *The Writer* March 1987:19–21. Kamen believes that young readers require biographers to pay particular attention to the details about their subjects' lives.

Karl, Frederick. "Three Problematical Areas in Conrad Biography." *Conrad Revisited: Essays for the Eighties.* Ed. Ross C. Murfin. University, Alabama: U of Alabama P, 1985. 13–31. Exploration of how the biographer must create his subject's life even when he has a storehouse of information.

Kinnamon, Keneth. "Call and Response: Intertextuality in Two Autobiographical Works by Richard Wright and Maya Angelou." *Studies in Black American Literature: Belief vs. Theory in Black American Literary Criticism, Vol. II.* Eds. Joe Weixlmann and Chester J. Fontenot. Greenwood, Florida: Penkevill, 1986. 122–34. Discussion of the striking thematic similarities between two Black autobiographical works.

Lejeune, Philippe. *Bibliographie: des études en langue française sur la littérature personnelle et les récits de vie; II: 1984–1985.* Paris: Cahiers de Sémiotique Textuelle 7 (1986). Plans are currently underway to include the bibliographic entries in "Life-Writing for the Mid-1980s" as part of an "annexe" to the 1988 issue of *Bibliographie.*

Lockyer, Roger. "Writing History . . . the Experience and Approach of Two Historians." *History Today* November 1984:46–49. Describes the challenges of creating interpretive biographies for the "analytical" historian.

Longford, Elizabeth. "The Riddle of Queen Victoria's Stockings and Other Reflections of a Biographer." *New York Times Book Review* 3 Aug. 1986:3. The diversified roles and varied writing techniques of one modern day biographer.

Looby, Christopher. " 'The Affairs of the Revolution Occasion'd the Interpretation': Writing, Revolution, Deferral, and Conciliation in Franklin's *Autobiography.*" *American Quarterly* 38.1 (1986): 72–96. The role of language as it relates to the thematic concerns explored in Franklin's *Autobiography.*

Lourie, Margaret A., Domna C. Stanton, and Martha Vicinus, eds. "Women and Memory." *Michigan Quarterly Review* 26.1 (1987). This special issue contains many of the papers and samples of creative writing which were presented at a conference on memory and Women's Studies which was held March 20–23, 1986 in the Rackham Amphitheatre.

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Makdisi, George. "The Diary in Islamic Historiography: Some Notes." *History Theory* 25.2 (1986): 73–85. In contrast to the West, Islam not only developed the diary early in its history, but it is believed that the diary antedates and is related to three genres of historiographical literature.

Mathias, Frank F. "Writing a Memoir: The Involvement of Art with Craft." *The History Teacher* May 1986:373–83. A war veteran describes the process of writing a memoir.

McLeese, Don. "Rock Around the Schlock—The Trouble with Pop Star Biographies." *New York Times Book Review* 4 May 1986:37. According to McLeese, many of the biographies written about pop stars are far inferior to the music and the people listening to it.

Moore, Ann W. "A Question of Accuracy: Errors in Children's Biographies." *School Library Journal* February 1985:34–35. Moore warns that biographers writing for children must guard against factual inaccuracies, incomplete or misleading statements, oversimplification, and false, incorrect information.

Neubauer, C. E. "Tradition and Change in Charity Waciuma's Autobiography *Daughter of Mumbi.*" *WLWE* 25.2 (1985): 211–21. Autobiography as a literary genre has developed in Africa in response to the decline of communal solidarity as well as the increase in spiritual, intellectual, familial, and political exile.

Novak, Mark. "Biography after the End of Metaphysics: A Critique of Epigenetic Evolution." *International Journal of Aging and Human Development* 22.3 (1985–86): 189–204. Novak suggests that biography is a psychological analysis and a cultural critique.

Prose Studies September 1985. "Modern Selves: Essays on Modern British and American Autobiography." Volume is informally organized into two sections on Gender and Autobiography and a third on the Politics of Autobiography.

Renza, Louis A. "Killing Time with Mark Twain's Autobiographies." *ELH* 54.1 (1987): 157–82. Discusses how seriously the reader is meant to take Twain's so-called unfinished autobiographical writings.

Rochman, Hazel. "Putting Life in Biography." *New York Times Book Review* 21 Jan. 1986: 24. According to Rochman, biographies written for the children's market which are sloppily researched, insipid, and of a poor quality show a lack of respect for the reader.

Rosenwald, Lawrence. "Sewall's *Diary* and the Margins of Puritan Literature." *American Literature* October 1986:325–41. Discussion as to why scholars are reluctant to critique Sewall's *Diary* as a literary text and how this situation relates to misconceptions regarding the nature of the Puritan diary.

Rubenstein, Jill. "Women's Biography as a Family Affair: Lady Louisa Stuart's 'Biographical Anecdotes' of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu." *Prose Studies* May 1986: 3–21. Wortley's work is surveyed not only as a valuable contribution to literary and social history, but also as an interesting insight into the lives of two remarkable women.

Sanders, Valerie. " 'Absolutely an act of duty': Choice of Profession in Autobiographies by Victorian Women." *Prose Studies* December 1986:54–70. Exploration of the special problems Victorian women had in justifying to their audiences their decisions to pursue careers as professional writers.

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Saul, Wendy E. "Living Proof: What Helen Keller, Marilyn Monroe, and Marie Curie Have in Common." *School Library Journal* October 1986:103–08. Children's biographers writing about so-called successful women have to watch becoming too heavy-handed and laudatory in their treatment of subjects.

The Sewanee Review January 1987. The emphasis of this special issue is on autobiographic practice rather than theory.

Shapiro, Michael J. "Reading Biography." *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* September 1986:331–65. Shapiro discusses the political one-sidedness of "pious" biographies which create American heroes from historical figures.

Sheehy, Donald G. "The Poet as Neurotic: The Official Biography of Robert Frost." *American Literature* October 1986:393–410. Biographers must often tread the dangerous ground of attempting to understand what psychological forces were operative during a writer's formative years.

Southern Review April 1986. "Autobiography: Theory, Criticism, Instances." This special issue contains theoretical papers from first International Symposium on Autobiography and Autobiography Studies held at Louisiana State University in March 1985.

Steel, Ronald. "The Biographer as Detective: What Walter Lippmann Preferred to Forget." *New York Times Book Review* 21 July 1985:3, 16. Oftentimes authorized biographers must probe beyond the evasions of their subjects.

Tausky, Thomas E. " 'Passion to Live in This Splendid Past': Canadian and Australian Autobiographies of Childhood." *Ariel* July 1986:39–62. Tausky bases his selection process on Coe's criteria for childhood autobiography.

Tracy, Robert. "Stranger Than Truth: Fictional Autobiography and Autobiographical Fiction." *Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction* 15 (1986): 275–89. Tracy describes the uneasy relationship between the life described in autobiography and the life that the subject of it actually lived by focusing on works by Dickens and Trollope.

Trombley, Stephen. "Personal History." *History Today* May 1985:7–8. Trombley warns that historians who choose to write literary biographies must become less afraid of interpretation and subjectivity.

Wagenaar, Willem A. "My Memory: A Study of Autobiographical Memory over Six Years." *Cognitive Psychology* April 1986:225–52. According to Wagenaar's findings, temporal autobiographical information functions in a different manner than information about what, who, and where.

Warren, Robert Penn. " 'Poetry is a Kind of Unconscious Autobiography'." *New York Times Book Review* 12 May 1985:9–10. According to Warren, poetry, in its "hazardous attempt at self-understanding," is very much like autobiography.

Weiss, James Michael. "Hagiography by German Humanists, 1483–1516." *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 15.2 (1985): 299–316. In terms of its critical precision, piety, patriotism, and use of propaganda, the hagiography written by German humanists exemplifies essential characteristics of the German humanist movement.

Women's Diaries: A Quarterly Newsletter. Vol. 4 (1986). Although the editor, Jane DuPree Begos, had to discontinue this newletter, Magic Circle Press has agreed to publish some of the material which has appeared in previous issues in an anthology sometime in 1988.

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The Yale Review 73.2 (1984). Special issue devoted to "The Telling of Lives, II," the uses of biography and autobiography in fiction, poetry, history, literary criticism, and ethnography.

Young, Michael Cochise. " 'The True Hero of the Tale': De Quincey's *Confessions* and Affective Autobiographical Theory." *Thomas De Quincey: Bicentenary Studies.* Ed. Robert Lance Snyder. Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1985. 54–71. Discusses the conflicting need for both factual accuracy and artistic license as it relates to the divided self of the narrative speaker in De Quincey's *Confessions.*

Young-Bruehl, Elisabeth. "Psychoanalysis and Biography." *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, Volume 40.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1985. 535–56. Presentation of the three major differences between therapeutic practice and biography writing: the biographical subject is not analysand, the biographer is not functioning as an analyst, and a biography is not a case history.

BOOKS

Anderson, Graham. *Philostratus: Biography and Belles Lettres in the Third Century A.D.* London: Croom Helm, 1986. The implications of a sophist's point of view in terms of what a late antique littérateur brings to biography.

Andrews, William L., ed. *Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women's Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century.* Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986. The contribution of three representative Black female slaves to the spiritual autobiographical tradition.

———. *To Tell a Free Story: The First Century of Afro-American Autobiography, 1760–1865.* Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1986. According to Andrews, "the import of the autobiographies of black people during the first century of the genre's existence in the United States is that they 'tell a free story' as well as talk about freedom as a theme and goal of life."

Autobiography in French Literature. French Literature Series, Vol. XII. Columbia: U of South Carolina, 1985. Includes articles in French and English as well as a bibliography by William T. Starr.

Bawer, Bruce. *The Middle Generation: The Lives and Poetry of Delmore Schwartz, Randall Jarrell, John Berryman, and Robert Lowell.* Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1986. According to Robert Lowell, his contemporary poets really "had the same life, the generic one" their generation offered.

Burnett, John, David Vincent, and David Mayall, eds. *The Autobiography of the Working Class: An Annotated, Critical Bibliography, Vol. I: 1790–1900.* Brighton: Harvester, 1984. Important research tool listing over 800 autobiographies written by self-proclaimed members of the "working class."

Caraway, Charless. *Foothold on a Hillside: Memories of a Southern Illinoisan.* Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1986. Personal recollections which offer insights into the heritage of America which traditional history is unable to provide.

Coe, Richard N. *Reminiscences of Childhood: An Approach to a Comparative Mythology.* Leeds: Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, 1984. A portion of Part II of Coe's study of childhood autobiography *(When the Grass Was Taller)* focusing on comparative differences between the child's experiences in various countries and including the author's comprehensive bibliography.

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Cole, John Y., ed. *Biography & Books.* Washington: Library of Congress, 1986. Key papers from a symposium about the writing, publishing, and influence of biography held at the Library of Congress on November 9 and 10, 1983.

Collins, Robert A. and Howard D. Pearce. *The Scope of the Fantastic—Culture, Biography, Themes, Children's Literature: Selected Essays from the First International Conference on the Fantastic in Literature and Film.* Section on "Fantasy and Biography" reveals how a writer's conscious and unconscious motivations are often cloaked in narrative fantasy.

Critchfield, Richard. *Those Days: An American Album.* Garden City, New York: Anchor, 1986. Uses "family history" as a springboard to document social history in the American outland.

Culley, Margo, ed. *A Day at a Time: The Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present.* New York: The Feminist Press, 1985. Aim of this diary collection is to create a mosaic of American women's history as well as suggest certain changes in the form, content, and function of the diary as a verbal construct.

Daniel, Lois. *How to Write Your Own Life Story: A Step by Step Guide for the Non-Professional Writer.* 2nd ed. Chicago: Chicago Review, 1985. Method of teaching autobiographical writing with emphasis on ways of organizing life materials and methods for prompting recall of past events.

Davis, Charles T. and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. *The Slave's Narrative.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985. Collection of essays addressing autobiographical narratives written or dictated by ex-slaves which highlight the nature and function of the genre and the world they manage to represent.

Feal, Rosemary Geisdofer. *Novel Lives: The Fictional Autobiography of Guillermo Cabrera Infante and Mario Vargas Llosa.* Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina Department of Romance Languages, 1986. Introduction surveys the controversial theoretical issue of what actually can be considered autobiography.

Fraser, Catherine C. *Problems in a New Medium: Autobiographies by Three Artists.* New York: Peter Lang, 1984. Analysis of three little known German 19th-century autobiographies and an examination of fictionalization in autobiography.

Fromm, Gloria G., ed. *Essaying Biography: A Celebration for Leon Edel.* Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1986. Essay collection which centers around the legacy of Leon Edel, Henry James scholar, teacher, and biographer.

Gandelman, Ronald, ed. *Autobiographies in Experimental Psychology.* Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1985. Symposium participants were asked to address those factors, autobiographical in nature, which led to their interests in behavioral studies.

Garraty, John A. *The Nature of Biography.* New York: Garland, 1985. Originally published in 1957, Garraty's work was reissued as part of a series on history and historiography.

Harrell, Carolyn L. *Kith and Kin: A Portrait of a Southern Family (1630–1934).* Macon: Mercer UP, 1984. Multi-generational account of an American family whose story is representative of countless undocumented Southern family histories.

Hawkins, Anne Hunsaker. *Archetypes of Conversion: The Autobiographies of Augustine, Bunyon, and Merton.* Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1985. Study of three different

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phases in Christianity's history reflecting the diversity of the Christian experience as it is documented in autobiography.

Hoberman, Ruth. *Modernizing Lives: Experiments in English Biography, 1918–1939.* Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1987. The impact of literary modernism on the art of biography.

Karlen, Arno. *Napoleon's Glands and Other Ventures in Biohistory.* Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1984. Karlen integrates information from the medical, biological, and behavioral sciences to interpret the "biohistories" of several well-known individuals and social historical events.

Korshin, Paul J., ed. *Johnson After Two Hundred Years.* Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1986. Part II focuses on scholarship relating to Johnson's life.

Krieg, Joann, ed. *Walt Whitman: Here and Now.* Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1985. Part I offers biographical criticism on Whitman.

Krupat, Arnold. *For Those Who Come After: A Study of Native American Autobiography.* Berkeley: U of Calif. P, 1985. Krupat applies the tools of post-structuralist theory to consider such issues as voice, text, performance, and "author" in Native American autobiography.

Lesy Michael. *Visible Light.* New York: Times Books, 1985. Through actual photographs, Lesy shows how photography has become in this part of the century a powerful autobiographical medium which "reveals the private minds of its practitioners."

Loesberg, Jonathan. *Fictions of Consciousness: Mill, Newman, and the Reading of Victorian Prose.* New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1986. By viewing autobiography as a genre which transforms philosophy into narrative, Loesberg surveys autobiographic discourse as a means to discuss some concepts of consciousness important to Victorian thought.

Madelénat, Daniel. *La biographie.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1984. Ambitious "treatise" on Western biography not only because of its scope (refers to some 500 authors), but also due to its enlightened use of technical terminology.

Marquess, William Henry. *Lives of the Poet: The First Century of Keats Biography.* University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1985. Marquess uses the single case study of an author as a vehicle to discuss an area of literary biography.

McFarland, Gerald W. *A Scattered People: An American Family Moves West.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1985. Recounts "anonymous" lives whose westward migration reflects the concept and ideal of the American dream's democratic vision.

McGann, Jerome J., ed. *Historical Studies and Literary Criticism.* Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1985. Part III explores "biographical contexts and the critical object."

McNaron, Toni A. H., ed. *The Sister Bond: A Feminist View of a Timeless Connection.* New York: Pergamon, 1985. McNaron's biographical commentary on several pairs of famous blood-related sisters leads to her feminist assessment of a number of their spiritually-related counterparts.

Miller, Eleanor M. *Street Woman.* Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1986. Miller's Afterward is especially valuable in documenting the compilation and synthesis of oral interviews into intensive life histories.

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Miller, Marilyn Jeanne. *The Poetics of Nikki Bungaku: A Comparison of the Traditions, Conventions, and Structure of Heian Japan's Literary Diaries with Western Autobiographical Writings.* New York: Garland, 1985. The Nikki Bungaku (diary or autobiographical literature) of Japan serves as the basis for a comparative study of the Japanese and Western autobiographical traditions.

Miller, Robert Keith. "Carlyle's *Life of John Sterling:* A Study in Victorian Biography." Ann Arbor: UMI Research, 1987. The text of *Life of John Sterling* becomes the basis for a more generalized discussion of Carlyle as a biographer and the Victorian response to his life-writing.

Monsman, Gerald. *Confessions of a Prosaic Dreamer: Charles Lamb's Art of Autobiography.* Durham, N.C.: Duke UP, 1984. Lamb's employment of figurative language and compositional structures in secular autobiographical confession.

Oates, Stephen B. Prologue. *The Art of Biography.* By Paul Murray Kendall. 1965 New York: W. W. Norton, 1985. Kendall's discussion of some of the social forces that influence the art of biography is prefaced by a new Prologue by Oates.

———. *Biography as High Adventure: Life-Writers Speak on Their Art.* Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1986. Oates gathers together ten essayists who are exclusively concerned with biography as narrative art so that they might explore the nature of life-writing.

Origo, Iris. *A Need to Testify: Portraits of Lauro de Bosis, Ruth Draper, Gaetano Salvemini, Ignazio Silone and an Essay on Biography.* London: John Murray, 1984. In her "Essay on Biography," Origo believes that life-writers must not only maintain their enthusiasm and veracity, but they must also deal with the temptations to suppress, to invent, and to sit in judgment.

Oxbury, Harold. *Great Britons: Twentieth-Century Lives.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985. Intended to portray the history and character of modern Britain through its most notable citizens, this companion work to the *Dictionary of National Biography* covers those British subjects who died between 1915 and 1980.

Peterson, Linda H. *Victorian Autobiography: The Tradition of Self-Interpretation.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1986. Peterson shows how the Protestant autobiography helped to influence the literary form and historical perceptions of many Victorian autobiographers who attempted to dislodge the form from the "typological hermeneutics in which it had originated."

The Saur Biographical Archive Series. New York: KG Saur. This series, which currently includes separate volumes on British, American, German, and Portuguese/IberoAmerican figures, will be expanded to include volumes on other national groups. Ultimately, one computer data-base will link all the citations in the entire series.

Scriven, Michael. *Sartre's Existential Biographies.* New York: Macmillan, 1984. Scriven attempts to explain the existence of what he describes as the "strange" and "bizarre" phenomena of the Sartrean existential biographies.

Stanfield, James Field. *An Essay on the Study and Composition of Biography.* New York: Garland, 1986. Reprint of Stanfield's classic and pioneering work originally published in 1813.

Stanton, Domna C. and Jeanine Parisier Plottel, eds. *The Female Autograph.* Vol. 12–13. New York: New York Literary Forum, 1984. A collage of pieces

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which explore the subjects of female autobiography, memoirs, letters, and diaries.

Stevenson, David, ed. *Reminiscences of an Unlettered Man: Robert Barclay, 1850–1924.* Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1985. Representative autobiography of a Scottish working man whose personal anecdotes show what life was like in the countryside of the North East (Scotland) a century ago.

Swindells, Julia. *Victorian Writing and Working Women: The Other Side of Silence.* Cambridge: Polity, 1985. Explanations of the self-perceptions of 19th-century working women at home and at work.

Tatman, Sandra L., and Roger W. Moss. *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1700–1930.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1985. Makes available what is now known about those local builders and architects who will never be found in national compilations.

Thomas, Frank P. *How to Write the Story of Your Life.* Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 1984. Approaches autobiography writing as a step by step or "one bite at a time" process.

Tinling, Marion. *Women Remembered: A Guide to Landmarks of Women's History in the United States.* New York: Greenwood, 1986. U.S. women's biographical history as it is reflected in public monuments, buildings, and other sites.

Vance, John A., ed. *Boswell's Life of Johnson: New Questions, New Answers.* Athens: U of Georgia P, 1985. The artistic import of Boswell's work on our understanding of literary biography.

Whale, John, C. *Thomas De Quincey's Reluctant Autobiography.* London: Croom Helm, 1984. Explores the way De Quincey uses the format of journalism and criticism to present his autobiographical experience.

Zinsser, William, ed. *Extraordinary Lives: The Art and Craft of American Biography.* New York: American Heritage, 1986. Six eminent biographers explain the pleasures and problems of their craft of reconstructing lives.

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Reviewed Elsewhere

(The following Contributing Review Editors have prepared "Reviewed Elsewhere": Electa Arenal (Women's Studies), Zelda Irene Brooks (Spanish Literature), Marie-José Fassiotto (French Literature), Michael Fassiotto (Popular Biography), and Mark Helbling (American Culture and African Literature and Culture.)

AQUINO, CORAZON

Corazon Aquino: The Story of a Revolution. Lucy Komisar. New York: George Braziller, pp. 290. $16.95.

Reviewed by Francis X. Clines. *The New York Times Book Review,* May 3, 1987, p. 52.

"Obviously the author saw a story here beyond what was already known, but it does not satisfactorily emerge, and the book serves better as a thorough journal of Mrs. Aquino's first year in office than a judgemental biography."

BERENSON, BERNARD

Bernard Berenson: The Making of a Legend. Ernest Samuels. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, pp. 680. $25.

Reviewed by John Updike. *The New York Times Book Review,* March 29, 1987, pp. 1, 35–37.

"Though an 'official biography,' sanctioned by Harvard and Nicky Mariano—the chief keeper for 40 years of the Berenson flame—the book does not shy from showing its subject as vain, snobbish, ruthlessly romantic and incorrigibly luxury-loving."

Artful Partners: Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveen. Colin Simpson. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., $22.50.

Reviewed by John Updike. *The New York Times Book Review,* March 29, 1987, pp. 1, 35–37.

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"It is always a pleasure to see a reverenced reputation besmirched, and Colin Simpson works hard, in his roundly detailed account of a secret partnership between 'the most successful art broker of the twentieth century' and the high-art-minded sage of I Tatti, to do some besmirching."

BERGAMÍN, JOSÉ

Perfume and Poison. A Study Of The Relationship Between José Bergamín and Juan Ramón Jiménez. Nigel Dennis. Kassel: Reichenberger, 1985. pp. 159.

Reviewed by Juan Cano Ballesta. *Hispanic Review.* vol. 55, Winter 1987, pp. 123–5.

One of the merits of this book is the study of José Bergamín, who according to Nigel Dennis, has been kept marginal from the so-called generation of 27. Dennis provides biographic information and abundant documentation to illustrate the hostile master-disciple relationship between Jiménez and Bergamín, which seemed common among writers of that generation.

BERNSTEIN, LEONARD

Bernstein: A Biography. Joan Peyser. New York: Beech Tree Books/William Morrow and Company, pp. 481. $22.95.

Reviewed by Leon Botstein. *The New York Times Book Review,* May 10, 1987, pp. 3, 27.

"Despite her [Peyser's] efforts, we are better off just to listen to Mr. Bernstein's music work and stand in awe of his prowess as a conductor while we wait for the time when a more complete biography of this great and troubled genius will be possible."

BORGES, JORGE LUIS

Jorge Luis Borges: Life, Word and Criticism. Donald A. Yates. Fredericton, NB, Canada: York Presses Ltd., 1984. pp. 41.

Reviewed by George R. McMurray. *Hispanic Review,* vol. 55, Winter 1987, pp. 134–5.

Yates's book provides an excellent introduction for those who know little about the Argentine master Jorge Luis Borges. He retells Borges's life together with his involvement in literary activities, illustrating the subsequent statement that "Borges' life has been literature."

This book is divided into five chapters, including

1) a biography of Borges
2) a list of his major works
3) a summary of his principal writings
4) an evaluation of his achievements
5) an annotated bibliography.

BOURKE-WHITE, MARGARET

Margaret Bourke-White: A Biography. Vicki Goldberg. New York: Harper and Row, 1986. pp. 416. $25.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Elsa Dorfman. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 6, March 1987, pp. 8–9.

"Margaret Bourke-White's career as a photojournalist will remain unique in the history of photography . . . Goldberg follows the adventure chronology that Bourke-

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White herself established in her autobiography. . . . It tells us a lot of what she did and who she met and where she went. It tells us a little of what she thought about what she was doing . . . [It] whets our appetite for more information, more details, the whole story."

BOYLE, KAY

Kay Boyle, Artist and Activist. Sandra Whipple Spanier. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986. pp. 263. $22.50 hardcover.

Reviewed by Peggy Phelan. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 6, March 1987, pp. 10–12.

"Spanier's biography of Boyle argues that it was in France that her life and art became permanently entwined, and permanently focused on exploring the thin nets which create moral responsibility in love, in government and in tragedy. Filled with letters from Boyle correcting, emending, or supporting Spanier's readings, *Kay Boyle: Artist and Activist* is as much autobiography as it is critical biography."

CABRILLO, JUAN RODRIGUEZ

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo. Harry Kelsey. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1986. xiii + pp. 261. $25.00.

Reviewed by Ursula Lamb. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 4, March, 1987, pp. 1013–1014.

A fine study of this Spanish explorer, pilot, shipowner, merchant and author whose life has been "drowned in myth and shunted into obscurity." In addition, Kelsey's work is an excellent demonstration of the scholar at work, the search for verifiable data and the dependence on a community of scholars—curators, librarians, archivists, authors and specialists in various fields.

CÉZANNE, PAUL

Cézanne, the Steins, and Their Circle. John Rewald. Thames and Hudson. $12.95

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* April 13, 1987, p. 105.

"This little (sixty-odd pages) book is beautifully made and copiously illustrated in black-and-white. In it, Mr. Rewald, the art historian and biographer of Cézanne, examines the discovery and celebration of Cézanne's painting by Gertrude Stein and her older brothers, Leo and Michael, in Paris in the first part of this century."

CIBBER, COLLEY

Colley Cibber: A Biography. Helene Koon. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1986. xii + pp. 242; 8 black and white plates. $25.00.

Reviewed by Jack L. Knowles. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 2, no. 3, Spring, 1987, pp. 343–345.

"Koon's effort to paint a fresh picture of Colley Cibber, a portrait undistorted by the Tory Hostility so brilliantly conveyed in the satires of Fielding and Pope, is successful. *Colley Cibber: A Biography* is painstakingly researched, the fruit of more than a decade of labor. Koon is judicious in her assessment of sources and writes entertainingly, deftly weaving together the threads of the theatrical world in which Cibber played his public and private roles."

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COUSTEAU, JACQUES

Cousteau: An Unauthorized Biography. Axel Madsen. New York: Beaufort Books, pp. 270. $17.95.

Reviewed by Lawrence Wylie. *The New York Times Book Review,* March 8, 1987, pp. 16–17.

"Mr. Madsen's 'Cousteau' isn't long enough, at more than 250 pages, to cover the exhaustive and exhausting subject. This criticism makes me sound ungrateful. The truth is I enjoyed the book and am grateful for even this sketchy life of a fascinating man."

DOUGLASS, FREDERICK

The Mind of Frederick Douglass. Waldo E. Martin, Jr. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1984, xii + pp. 333. £26.10.

Reviewed by John White. *Journal of American Studies,* vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 148–149.

An incisive study, the first adequate intellectual biography of Frederick Douglass. Douglass is presented as an intellectual activist 'par excellence,' a towering figure who epitomized the "integrationist-assimilationist and protest traditions in black ideology."

DUVEEN, JOSEPH

See "Berenson, Bernard."

FITZGERALD

The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys. Doris Kearns Goodwin. Simon and Schuster, pp. 932. $22.95

Reviewed by Francis Russell. *The New York Review of Books,* April 23, 1987, pp. 3–6.

"What, one asks, does *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* add to the books already written about this dynastic family? I think that more than anything else it expands the background of known events and episodes by filling in with unknown, often telling, and sometimes poignant details."

GAUTIER, JUDITH

Judith Gautier: A Biography. Joanna Richardson. New York: Franklin Watts, pp. 312. $22.95.

Reviewed by Sheilly Temchin. *The New York Times Book Review.* April 26, 1987, p. 22.

"Theophile Gautier's elder daughter, as depicted in Joanna Richardson's engaging and meticulously documented 'Judith Gautier,' was an accomplished, original and beautiful woman whose gifts earned her public acclaim and a wide circle of admirers."

GORNICK, VIVIAN

Fierce Attachments: A Memoir. Vivian Gornick. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1987. pp. 204. $15.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Annette Kolodny. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 9, June 1987, pp. 4–5.

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"At the outset, the narrator is 45, her mother 77; by the end, three years have elapsed. Three years in an ever-volatile relationship, but a lifetime of memory and association that ineluctably binds these women. *Fierce Attachments* reads with the seamlessness of a novel. It is, however, a work of deeply honest self-examination, powerfully written and impossible to put down . . . In something akin to a brutal interrogation of memory, Vivian Gornick anatomizes a life that is always 'difficult: a glory and a punishment.' For this prominent feminist writer and speaker, 'Ideas are excitement, glamorous company.' And yet, she admits, 'Loneliness eats into me.' . . . [It] is precisely . . . for its refusal to evade the contradictions and compromises of our lives, that this book must be praised . . . the contained passion of its language and the elegance of its construction make it one of the major literary achievements of this supposedly post-feminist decade."

WILLIAM, LORD GRENVILLE

Lord Grenville 1759–1834. Peter Jupp. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. viii + pp. 506. $45.00.

Reviewed by Jeremy Black. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 20, no. 3, Spring, 1987, pp. 349–352.

"William, Lord Grenville (1759–1834) has traditionally been overshadowed by his cousin William Pitt, and Peter Jupp's intelligent, thoroughly researched and well written biography is the first devoted to him."

HOOVER, J. EDGAR

Secrecy and Power: The Life of J. Edgar Hoover. Richard Gid Powers. New York: The Free Press, pp. 624. $27.95.

Reviewed by Norval Morris. *The New York Times Book Review,* March 8, 1987, pp. 1, 36.

"This volume by Richard Gid Powers, a professor of history at the College of Staten Island of the City University of New York, is a probing, balanced and lively analysis of the life of a man who for half a century survived at the center of the storms of domestic turbulence that periodically bedevil this nation in its long search for domestic tranquillity."

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* March 23, 1987, p. 101.

"A magisterial biography of the former director—one could almost say the inventor—of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Hoover's conventional middle-class boyhood, the author believes, accounts for his reverence for 'traditional' American values and his deep-seated suspicion of dissent. (Crime, to him, existed because of 'a lack of discipline.') It was moralistic fervor, Mr. Powers claims, that drove Hoover throughout his career."

JAMES, HENRY

The Complete Notebooks of Henry James. Edited by Leon Edel and Lyall H. Powers. Oxford. $30.

Reviewed by Howard Moss. *The New Yorker,* March 9, 1987, pp. 101–104.

"What makes these notebooks 'complete' is the addition of new material: notes James wrote to his publishers (including the scenario for 'The Ambassadors'), early sketches

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of other work, an unfinished short story ('Hugh Merrow'), his address lists and cash accounts, and, most important, his pocket diaries from 1909 through 1915—datebooks that widen out to more than engagement books usually imply: an emotional outburst or two, confessions, thumbnail scenic sketches, weather reports, a medical history. Because every last scrap James unwittingly left behind is reproduced here, the Edel-Powers book is more comprehensive than its predecessor."

JIMÉNEZ, JUAN RAMON

See "Bergamín, José."

KENNEDY

See "Fitzgerald."

KING, MARTIN LUTHER JR.

Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Morrow. $19.95.

Reviewed by Bill McKibben. *The New Yorker,* April 6, 1987, pp. 102–112.

"The real-time feel of this volume will give those who follow King as rebels an idea of what to expect, and allows the rest of us to draw some informed conclusions about a life that has too often been shrouded in clouds of adoration."

KIRKLAND, GELSEY

Dancing on My Grave. Gelsey Kirkland. New York: Doubleday, 1986. pp. 286. $17.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Robin Herndobler. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 7, April 1987, pp. 8–9.

"Kirkland's book is filled with black humor as well as self-accusation and penetrating insight into the nature of her drive to suffering and death; . . . Insight follows irony as she identifies the relationship between drug use and life in a dance company . . . The story reads like a modern fable for the feminine condition."

LAMBERT

The Lamberts: George, Constant & Kit. Andrew Motion. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $22.50

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* May 18, 1987, pp. 118–119.

"The author has re-created the bohemian life of twentieth-century London as the setting for this tragic and moving story of three lives. A memorable book."

LEMAY, CURTIS

Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay. Thomas M. Coffey. New York: Crown, 1986. iv + pp. 474. $18.95.

Reviewed by Michael S. Sherry. *The Journal of American History.* vol. 73 no. 4. March, 1987, pp. 1071–1072.

A failed biography, we see too much of what is already known and too little of "a more complex man playing a more complex historical role than his reputation for city-wrecking strategies and Cold War conservatism allows." The author relies too greatly on oral histories and interviews.

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LEWIS, WYNDHAM

Wyndham Lewis. ed. Jeffrey Meyers. Roy Campbell. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1985. pp. 73.

Reviewed by Rowland Smith. *Research in African Literatures.* vol. 18, no. 1, Spring, 1987, pp. 118–122.

Suddenly, Roy Campbell's lost 1932 biography of Wyndham Lewis has appeared, first in Blast 3 (Black Sparrow Press, 1984) and soon after from the University of Natal Press (1985). Campbell's small book is disappointing, likely to diminish his own reputation while doing little "to elucidate the power and energy of Lewis's writing up to 1932."

MENGELE, JOSEF

Mengele: The Complete Story. Gerald L. Posner and John Ware. McGraw-Hill, pp. 364. $18.95.

Reviewed by Neal Ascherson. *The New York Review of Books,* May 28, 1987, pp. 29–34.

". . . Gerald Posner and John Ware have written a book on Mengele—well researched and wonderfully free of all the customary fantasy and exaggeration—that makes fascinating reading."

MONTGOMERY, BERNARD LAW, VISCOUNT

Monty: Final Years of the Field Marshall, 1944–1976. Nigel Hamilton. McGraw-Hill. $29.95.

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* April 27, 1987, p. 104.

"This third, and concluding, volume of the definitive biography describes a 'sacred monster' growing more monstrous. Mr. Hamilton believes that Bernard Law Montgomery, Field Marshal and Viscount, was *the* Allied military genius of the Second World War. He was also a spiteful intriguer."

NGA, TRAN THI

Shallow Graves: Two Women and Vietnam. Wendy Wilder Larsen and Tran Thi Nga. New York: Harper and Row, 1986. pp. 320. $16.95 hardcover, $7.95 paper.

Reviewed by Eileen Lotozo. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 9, June 1987, pp. 12–13.

". . . *Shallow Graves,* in spare prose poems, reinstates women in Vietnam—a landscape from which they are continually dismissed by the standard histories and popularizations of the war. Larsen writes: "I feel like the performer of Mrs. Nga's story as well as my own." She likens herself to the traditional Vietnamese troubadours who went from village to village . . . Mrs. Nga has survived famine, firestorms, battles, bomb attacks and American relocation camps. She now copes with cultural dislocation in the suburbs of Connecticut . . . If Nga's story personalizes much of Vietnam's complex history, Wendy Larsen's story is an indictment of American shallowness and cultural chauvinism."

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NIXON, RICHARD M.

Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913–1962. Stephen E. Ambrose. New York: Simon & Schuster, pp. 752. $22.95.

Reviewed by Ronald Steele. *The New York Times Book Review,* April 26, 1987, pp. 3, 34–35.

"While this postrevisionist view of Mr. Nixon provides no revelations and is based on no special access to his subject, it is marked by a diligent use of the sources, especially the Nixon and Eisenhower papers, as well as a good many revealing interviews with those who knew the younger Mr. Nixon."

ORTON, JOE

The Orton Diaries. Edited by John Lahr. New York: Harper and Row, pp. 304. $19.95.

Reviewed by Benedict Nightingale. *The New York Times Book Review,* May 10, 1987, pp. 9–10.

"Those claims to fame—Orton's subversive genius, Orton's bloody end—are not unconnected. That was the impression left by the admirable account of the playwright's life John Lahr published nine years ago, 'Prick Up Your Ears.' It is reinforced by the diary Orton began around Christmas, 1966, and kept until a few days before his death in August 1967. Tantalizing snippets from it appeared in Mr. Lahr's biography, but not until now had it been available in full; and it shows how the plays reflected the man, and how both plays and man excited jealousies that turned lethal."

PERSHING, JOHN J.

Pershing: General of the Armies. Donald Smythe. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. xiii + pp. 399. $27.50.

Reviewed by David A. Tretlet. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 4, March, 1987, pp. 1063–64.

Exhaustively researched and superbly documented, this concluding volume of Smythe's two-part biography is, in the final analysis, unsatisfactory. The portrait lacks depth; too little attention is given to Pershing's character and ideas.

PIOZZI, HESTER THRALE

Hester Thrale Piozzi: Portrait of a Literary Woman. William McCarthy. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985. xiii + pp. 306. $28.00.

Reviewed by William R. Siebenschuh. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 20, no. 3, Spring, 1987, pp. 345-349.

"McCarthy is as good as his word. After two introductory chapters which sketch Piozzi's life from childhood through marriage and briefly discuss Johnson's influence and literary gravitational pull, he focusses exclusively on the literary career. There are chapters on the poetry, the *Anecdotes of Samuel Johnson,* Piozzi's editorial work with her Johnsonian correspondence, the *Observations and Reflections,* and two major works far less well-known. McCarthy's reading of Piozzi's achievement and importance as a woman writer is heavily influenced by the work of modern feminist critics . . . Piozzi's career, McCarthy suggests, is a paradigm of the plight of the intelligent

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woman writer in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. . . . McCarthy's perceptions about Piozzi's gender-related problems and his suggestions about her rhetorical solutions will be his more lasting legacy. They suggest clear paths for future critics to follow and imply a new approach to a significant body of oft-neglected texts."

POPE, ALEXANDER

Alexander Pope: A Life. Maynard Mack. New York: W. W. Norton & Company; London: Yale University Press, 1985. pp. 975. 97 black and white plates. $22.50.

Reviewed by Peter Martin. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 20, no. 3, Spring, 1987, pp. 336–339.

"Although Professor Mack says he had to jettison large amounts of fascinating material to prevent the *Life* from growing into multiple volumes that would appear in intervals of several years, there is a satisfying sense of fullness and completeness about his book. The pace is crisp and steady. Particularly skillful—and this is one of the most difficult but crucial achievements in literary biography that is not intended merely for the specialist—is the author's manner of weaving critical discussions of the poems in and out of the narrative, so that they grow naturally out of events and are so many comments on them.

The notes and index (which includes names of modern critics) are so extensive and complete that the reader will find it easy to track down specialized studies. The first full-length biography of Pope for almost a century, this *Life* is not likely to be superseded for at least that long."

POTTER, BEATRIX

Beatrix Potter: Artist, Storyteller and Countrywoman. Judy Taylor. Frederick Warne. $24.95.

Reviewed by Leonard S. Marcus. *The New York Times Book Review,* April 26, 1987, p. 25.

"In this brief but copiously illustrated biography, Judy Taylor adds much fresh information to what was previously known about her sanguine-spirited and intensely private subject's life."

PRATT, ORSON

The Life and Thought of Orson Pratt. Breck England. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985. vxi + pp. 359. $14.95.

Reviewed by Valeen T. Avery. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 3, December, 1986, pp. 755–756.

A gracefully written, soundly researched study of the foremost Mormon intellectual of his time (1830–90). Tension between orthodox belief and his own intellectual point of view mark his personal and public life.

RANDALL, MARGARET

Albuquerque: Coming Back to the USA. Margaret Randall. Vancouver, B.C.: New Star Books (2504 York Ave, Vancouver, BC V6K 1E3), 1986. pp. 350. $19.95 hardcover, $12.95 paper.

Reviewed by Marilyn Zuckerman. *Women's Review of Books,* vol. 4, no. 7, April 1987, pp. 13–14.

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"Margaret Randall gives us the gift of her life during a year of enormous change. Her diary carries us past the lonely political figure portrayed in the media to discover the reality of struggle and ambivalence . . . One thing that make *Albuquerque* a model of the woman's journal is the presence of Randall's politics . . . another is its sometimes lyrical, novelistic style. The diary often resembles a Woolfian novel."

ROBINSON, SIR JOHN BEVERLEY

Sir John Beverley Robinson: Bone and Sinew of the Compact. Patrick Brode. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984. xvi + pp. 326. $45.10 cloth; $14.95 paper.

Reviewed by H. V. Nelles. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73, no. 4, March, 1987. pp. 1026–1027.

Sympathetic biography of an arch-Tory who, first as attorney general of Upper Canada and later as chief justice of the colony, was long close to the center of power. The biography, part of the conservative revisionism that has marked Canadian political history for the past generation, ironically serves to underscore the legitimacy of the issues Robinson so adamantly opposed in his life time.

SANTAYANA, GEORGE

George Santayana: A Biography. John McCormick. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp. 612. $30.

Reviewed by Bruce Kuklick. *The New York Times Book Review,* April 26, 1987, pp. 27–28.

"Mr. McCormick's narrative is exhaustively researched and stylishly written."

Review anonymous. *The New Yorker,* April 13, 1987, p. 106.

"An accomplished life of the philosopher and writer (1863–1952). Mr. McCormick helps us see how Santayana's boyhood transplantation from Spain to Boston and his parent's separation contributed to making him, as he wrote late in life, 'fatally *a stranger,* not only in any particular place but in the world at all.' "

SMITH, STEVIE

Stevie: A Biography of Stevie Smith. Jack Barbera and William McBrien. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 378. $24.95.

Reviewed by Katha Pollitt. *The New York Times Book Review,* May 10, 1987, p. 24.

"The sheer number of . . . anecdotes, not to mention the laboriousness and earnestness with which they are related, encourages the reader to condescend to Smith both as a person and as an artist. It doesn't help that the authors, like many biographers of women (but very few of men) place themselves on a first name basis with their subject, as though she were some dottie old relative. 'Stevie,' indeed!"

STEIN

See "Cézanne, Paul."

SUSANN, JACQUELINE

Lovely Me: The Life of Jacqueline Susann. Barbara Seaman, New York: William Morrow Company. $18.95.

Reviewed by Susan Isaacs. *The New York Times Book Review,* March 19, 1987, pp. 13–14.

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"Unfortunately, Ms. Seaman's biography is not equal to its subject. It isn't fun; its pace is slow and its people bland. The only information I gleaned from 'Lovely Me' that I could not have intuited from Jackie Susann's books and her public appearances was that she was bisexual, had an autistic son and converted from Judaism to Roman Catholicism. Interesting stuff, but in 'Lovely Me' these revelations are simply revealed."

SWIFT, JONATHAN

Jonathan Swift, A Hypocrite Reversed: A Critical Biography. David Nokes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985. pp. 427, illus. $19.95.

Reviewed by Frank H. Ellis. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 20, no. 3, Spring, 1987, pp. 339–343.

"The winner of the James Tait Black prize for biography in 1985 is David Nokes's *Jonathan Swift, A Hypocrite Reversed: A Critical Biography.* Nokes's biography has been favorably reviewed by H. T. Dickinson—'well-written, handsomely produced, and reasonably priced' (*Times Educational Supplement,* No. 3618 [1 November 1985], 23); by Nicholas Murray—'thoroughly readable and intelligent biography' (*New Statesman,* ser. 2, 110 [1 November 1985], 34); and by Pat Rogers—'the most accessible general biography since that of Middleton Murry' (*Books & Bookman,* No. 363 [January 1986], 10). Rogers adds that Nokes is 'one of the most acute critics of 19th-century literature now active.' Against this weight of evidence it would be foolish to struggle. *Jonathan Swift, A Hypocrite Reversed* is a good book."

TOSCANINI, ARTURO

Understanding Toscanini: How He Became an American Cultural-God and Helped Create a New Audience for Old Music. Joseph Horowitz. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $30.

Reviewed by Edward W. Said. *The New York Times Book Review,* March 8, 1987, pp. 7, 9.

"Mr. Horowitz's book ought to be read less as an entirely successful analysis of Toscanini than as a *cri de coeur* about the philistinism and commercialism of contemporary society."

VICTORIA

Victoria: An Intimate Biography. Stanley Weintraub. Dutton/Truman Talley Books, pp. 704. $26.95

Reviewed by David Cannadine. *The New York Review of Books,* April 23, 1987, pp. 30–31.

"Victoria, on this reading, was much more the mother of her children than the mother of her people, not so much a national icon as a brass-tacks queen."

WARREN, ROBERT PENN

Robert Penn Warren. Katharine Snipes. New York: Ungar Publishing Co., 1984. ix + pp. 206. $12.95.

Reviewed by Derek Pollard. *Journal of American Studies,* vol. 20, no. 1, April, 1986. pp. 140–141.

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A concise biographical sketch and chronological breakdown of Warren's extensive body of work serves to frame Snipes's effort to plumb his metaphysical speculations and traditional loyalties. Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) is used to guide the investigation of Warren's complex thinking.

WAYNE, ANTHONY

Anthony Wayne, Soldier of the Early Republic. Paul David Nelson. Bloomington, Ill.: Indiana University Press, 1985. pp. 303. $27.50.

Reviewed by Mark F. Miller. *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* vol. 20, no. 3, Spring, 1987, pp. 352–355.

"Nelson sets his sights on the label of 'Mad' Anthony Wayne and provides a convincing portrait of this revolutionary general and politician. Often maligned and misunderstood, Wayne emerges reborn from Nelson's account. This life and times biography, often critical of its subject, attempts to place Wayne into the main-stream of the revolution and of the new order that followed. Nelson succeeds admirably; Anthony Wayne is never far from center stage, but never alone either.

Nelson's study is an impressive account. His painstaking research has produced a first-rate investigation. As a result, our knowledge of a principal participant of the early republic has been heightened considerably."

WISTER, OWEN

Owen Wister: Chronicler of the West, Gentleman of the East. Darwin Payne. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1985. xiv + pp. 377. $24.95.

Reviewed by Edwin R. Bingham. *The Journal of American History,* vol. 73 no. 4, March, 1987, pp. 1059–1060.

A first-rate biography built from a rich collection of primary sources, most notably Wister's voluminous papers and letters exchanged with Theodore Roosevelt, Henry James, and Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. This first full-length published biography presents Wister as a talented, complex human being and not simply as an eastern writer of western fiction.

YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER

The Collected Letters of William Butler Yeats. Edited by John Kelly and Eric Domville. Oxford. $29.95.

Reviewed by Helen Vendler. *The New Yorker,* March 16, 1987, pp. 96–104.

"Mr. Kelly's luxurious fullness of annotation enables even a neophyte to line up the dramatis personae by class, religion, marital status, political affiliation, and geographical origin—information required for understanding the causes, quarrels, factions, debates, and intrigues that played so large a part in Yeats' turbulent life. Yeats is now a world author, and these notes make him available to the world."

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Reviews

DARYL CUMBER DANCE, ed., *Fifty Caribbean Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook.* Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986, 530 pp. $65.00.

Contemporary literature is increasingly global, and represents in many instances peoples, cultures, and histories foreign to the Western reader. Originating more and more outside the geographic boundaries of Europe and North America, these "new" literatures present challenges to the reader with prior literary exposure mainly to the canon of Continental literature. For these new frontiers of literature oftentimes introduce a quite different literary performance with, additionally, unfamiliar and culturally-nuanced subject matter and perspectives. One only need think of the Japanese writer Yukio Mishima and the very contrastive philosophic underpinnings of his works; or Wole Soyinka and his Nigerian mythologies; or Gabriel Marquez and his surrealist, political novels.

Faced with literatures that present new and unfamiliar cultural realities, critics' concern over interpretation has become a matter of great importance. Questions of hermeneutics now arise, especially over the sensitive matter of cultural interpretation —whether Western cultural experiences, even when augmented by the interpretative systems of comparative literature or New Criticism, sufficiently prepare us to interpret the special "character" and meaning of the new works. Taught by modern anthropology to appreciate the conventionality and culture-bound nature of even meaning itself, the Western reader is now conscious of his own restricted competencies in assigning meanings to unfamiliar works, and making literary judgments about them. It is today more readily accepted that interpretation by those culturally qualified to do so is essential. Even Derek Walcott, one of the least parochial of West Indian poets, has acknowledged that it is "almost essential for a person to experience the society first" before he can interpret a culture's literature adequately.

The new reference work *Fifty Caribbean Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook,* edited by Professor Daryl Dance, Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University, addresses the need for a comprehensive reference text that can

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inform readers about one of these new literatures—that of the the Caribbean. The essays of this collection provide biographical information about fifty leading writers of the Caribbean, offer culturally-informed critical analyses of their major works, and map the critical reception they have received. The latter is an especially useful feature of the work.

The editor has selected literary talents whom she considers as representing a national literary tradition. The fifty writers are "Caribbean" in their shared cultural identity and their works' expression of the Caribbean culture. The volume includes a few writers from the past such as Claude McKay and Herbert de Lisser, but it is not essentially historical and presents contemporary writers chiefly. The essays are written by scholars—there are thirty-nine writers of the fifty studies—who are mostly of Caribbean background or seem on familiar grounds with the Caribbean.

Professor Dance has selected fifty writers who, she feels, represent the voice of "a 'nation' during its efflorescence," writers "who have a sense of themselves." She correctly argues, in the introduction to the work, that West Indian literature achieved its identity only after the self-consciousness brought to it during the period of nationalism (the two decades of the 30's and 40's). The writers she has chosen delineate the contours of this literature, but show clearly that the Caribbean reality is complex and not un-problematic. For nurtured though these writers are upon the same soil, they emerge from an environment of overlapping (if not in troublesome ways distinct) cultures, and they register a complex response to this culture historically influenced by Slavery, Colonialism, and mixed ethnic migrations.

One importance of Dance's work is that it fills a vacuum. For there are few available reference works on Caribbean Anglophone writers. One of these is Donald E. Herdeck's *Caribbean Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical-Critical Encyclopedia,* published in 1979. There had been, of course, general studies of the literature, and individual studies of some of the writers, published mainly during the decades of the 60's and 70's. Examples of general studies are George Lamming's *The Pleasure of Exile* (1960), Wilson Harris's *Tradition, the Writer and Society* (1968), Louis James's *The Islands in Between* (1968), Gerald Moore's *The Chosen Tongue* (1969), Kenneth Ramchand's *The West Indian Novel and its Background* (1970), and Lloyd Brown's *West Indian Poetry* (1978). But Herdeck's work served the useful purpose of giving a comprehensive accounting of the recoverable writers of the area—numbering some 2,000—for the major West Indian language groups of English, French, Spanish and Dutch.

Because it selects to focus on fewer writers than Herdeck's work, and Anglophone ones only, *Fifty Writers* is a very helpful follow-up to Herdeck's work. It is able to offer relatively detailed biographies of these writers. But additionally, *Fifty Writers* diverges in two major ways from this counterpart, or from such other prototypes as the *Oxford Companion to American Literature.* First, its biographies are culturally authenticated by way of the biographers' personalized viewing of the writers. The biographers not only permit themselves to include personalized perspectives of the subjects, but also, from their insiders' knowledge of the culture, to use the cultural and social contexts as defining matrices also. Though some of the biographies are neutral and detached, those that have this personalized dimension—i.e., which cross the exacting boundary of reference biographies—are compelling and useful.

An individual's biography is the sum of his personal temperament and choices, but also of the influences from his cultural and historical contexts as well. The biographer who slights these contexts gives only a partial rendering of the writer. When these

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biographers of the Caribbean writers present character as composites of individuality, and cultural and social "character"—in their fullest "circumstantiality" (Edward W. Said)—the results are fully informative.

The biographies of Herbert G. de Lisser and Phyllis Shand Allfrey are good illustrations of this. H. G. de Lisser, the influential Creole editor, for forty years, for the important Jamaican newspaper the *Gleaner,* has left a legacy of novels that are as brilliant in their depiction of local peoples and language as they are insensitive to their worth. This anomaly is not muted in Rhonda Cobham's biography of de Lisser, as indeed it can be understood only if one is given a more frank insight into the cultural formation of the writer. Thus she explains de Lisser's profound intellectual attachment to the views of the pro-imperialist historian Anthony Froude. This is an important insider's insight, since its significance and import might otherwise have been overlooked, and the flawed nature of de Lisser's Black characterizations been underestimated.

Elaine Campbell's biography of Phyllis Shand Allfrey also has this culturally-extended purview. Her biography gives a fuller sense of the significance of this writer within the society. The biography reveals that Allfrey, a product of colonial history, like many other Caribbean writers is highly conscious of the mixed genetic heritages, and the creolized (mixed) language, institutions and culture of these islands. Her collection of poetry *Palm and Oak,* like Walcott's *Another Life,* exemplifies her acute awareness of the complexity and multiplicity of the Caribbean cultural reality.

The fifty writers number among them the internationally well-known Wilson Harris, C. L. R. James, V. S. Naipaul, Jean Rhys and Derek Walcott; locally famous and popular writers, including Michael Anthony, Louise Bennett, Martin Carter, John Hearne, Roger Mais, and Vic Reid; and the newer talents, examples of whom are Jamaica Kincaid and Edward Brathwaite.

Though this reference work presents a smaller number of writers than Herdeck's, its biographies, even so, suffer at times from the constraints of space. V. S. Naipaul's biography is a case in point. Whether among his avid readers in England and America, or among those in the West Indies, Naipaul shocks with his personal and literary viewpoints of the West Indies, which are persistently negative. Writer personalities such as Naipaul's do beg for a less sterilized approach, one more confrontational. Criticism, and literary biographies, seek largely to keep "biography" out of critical discussion. But it is crucial to explain writers more fully, especially when they enmesh so essentially with formative cultures. The biographer Robert D. Hamner slights issues surrounding Naipaul, offering instead quick justifications and palliatives. Avoiding analysis of the historical and cultural factors informing Naipaul's identity, the biography of Naipaul falls short of its potential. For when Naipaul speaks of the West Indies in *The Middle Passage* as a place where there is no history—"History is built around achievement and creation; and nothing was created in the West Indies"—or in *The Mimic Men* as "a little bastard world" upon which he has been "shipwrecked," he clearly shows the effect of his felt "alien" status as an East Indian in the midst of a colonial territory largely Black. Thus Hamner's biography could have given a more culturally-delineated portrait of this accomplished, but problematic, writer.

The critical essays of *Fifty Caribbean Writers* also weave into their critical discussions a substantial amount of socio-historical-cultural interpretation. Rarely is the more purely text-centered, New Critical mode used exclusively. In fact, this new reference work seems on step with Caribbean critical attitudes today. When the earlier bio-

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bibliographical study of Caribbean writers was published in 1979, one reviewer, in *World Literature Today,* praised that work for its "massive," "Sisyphean," "Herculean" undertaking, but wondered nevertheless whether it was successful by the standards of West Indian critics who took the view "that Caribbean literature is to be judged in terms of its own esthetics." In truth, this critical issue of Caribbean aesthetics is at the center of contemporary literary discussion; it has only just begun to be "elaborated," and is far from settled. It appears to quarrel with criticism that does not offer "an even-handed commitment to both aesthetics and social significance of literary art" (Lloyd Brown, introduction to *Critical Issues in West Indian Literature*). Caribbean criticism appears to insist, then, upon "rootedness" as a critical value.

Fifty Caribbean Writers provides critical interpretations which appear respectful of this challenge of "rootedness." The perspectives given of the literary works show a strong sense of definition; that Caribbean writing has an identity of its own and cannot be subsumed as a mere offshoot of British literature, nor as an afterthought. Responsive to critical attitudes, this reference work has utilized some of the most outspoken and prominent of the "new critics" of Caribbean literature such as Lloyd W. Brown, Edward Baugh, Mark A. McWatt, Daphne Morris, and Sandra Pouchet Paquet. With few exceptions the treatment of writer and works by the thirty-nine essayists is informed by a deep sense of the relevance of social, historical and cultural context to meaning in its most relevant sense.

Undertakings such as Professor Dance's seem to have this purport: to underscore the relationship that exists between art and society. Newer nations and societies adjust queasily to the aesthetics of "arts for arts' sake." Holding more closely to the principle of functionality, their critical stance is perhaps best complemented, then, by studies which reflect contexts. The culturally integrated biographies and studies which comprise *Fifty Caribbean Writers* should appeal to members of those cultures, and should, as well, provide "engaged" interpretations for the "new" readers.

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PHILIP POMPER, *The Structure of Mind in History: Five Major Figures in Psychohistory.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1985. 192 pp. $20.

PETER GAY, *Freud for Historians.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. 252 pp. $17.95.

HEINZ KOHUT, *Self Psychology and the Humanities: Reflections on a New Psychoanalytic Approach.* New York: Norton, 1985. 333 pp. $27.95.

There are few debates in the academic disciplines as durable as the one between historians and psychologists, and between their allies in biography writing and psychoanalysis. The debate is also often rancorous. Even so, speaking for himself and other literary biographers who certainly cannot be counted as psychoanalytic in approach, Richard Ellmann has acknowledged that "we are all still under Freud's long shadow." Only a well-cultivated ambivalence about Freudian orthodoxy, he suggests, can protect biography from its "ostentatious" elements. For Ellmann, the problem is how to minimize the formal influence of psychoanalytic theory while retaining the benefits of reasonable attention to the unconscious. It is the differences between fields that matters to Ellmann, as they do even for psychohistorians. Scholars who practise the

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hybrid disciplines—and colleagues who support and oppose them—pay close attention to their problematic aspects.[1]

It is still sometimes difficult even to state these differences in a useful form much less to resolve them. For example, philosopher A. L. Louch stresses the "complexity of the individual case" and the inevitable "impression forming" and guesswork that goes into estimating the consequences of the past and anticipating human behavior. He calls these "gifts of discernment and assessment" that are shared by all thoughtful observers of human experience. "It is not," Louch insists, "a matter of disciplines and expertise. In those fields where, in the interests of creating a discipline, the attempt is made to codify rules of assessment, of impression-formation, the result is self-defeating. It imposes criteria from without where what is required is assessment within the case, familiarity with the subject and the cases like his, and use of those gifts which we label as insight or flair precisely because we lack rules for their practise."[2]

About equal numbers of psychohistorians (including biographers) would agree with such a summary of their circumstances as would reject it for its cognitive liberalism. Indeed, historian and psychoanalyst Thomas Kohut has argued for "Psychohistory as History," or the essential identity of the two as forms of inquiry, sharing as they do the same problems of evidence, inference and empathy.[3] Other psychohistorians, eager to lend stability and consistency to their discipline, have initiated a search for a tradition, and for rules or standards of practise. They wish to make it possible to compare results and to fortify individual and collective achievements even while they resist positivistic trends in adjoining fields.

Philip Pomper's *The Structure of Mind in History* displays these goals as part of its contribution to the theory of history. It derives first from Freud's own insistence (in *Totem and Taboo*) that "there is an intellectual function in us which demands unity, connection, and intelligibility from any material, whether of perception or thought, that it grasps." Second, mindful of Freud's own "scientific realism" and general pessimism about the human condition, Pomper proposes an ambitious set of motives for a group of Freud's psychohistorical followers. "It would," he says on their behalf, "be a great consolation to know that an all-embracing benign program structures relationships and superintends change, whatever the motives of individuals or groups; that human suffering has redemptive value; and that a better order is emerging, in which we will be able to express freely the benign qualities within us, instead of what has been forced upon us under the pressure of dialectically necessary, but temporary structures of domination" (p. 45).

Both motives are represented in Pomper's summary of the collective impact of "The Psychohistorical Intelligentsia" and in lucid individual accounts of the work of Freud, Erik Erikson, Herbert Marcuse, Norman O. Brown and Robert Jay Lifton. An "intelligentsia" in Pomper's view is made up of "ideologues who create vast world views, artists whose imaginative works inspire the ideologues or are inspired by them, and popularizers who spread the idea to a larger community" (p. 4). And Pomper adds, with enough potential irony to shield him from criticism as an uncritical ideologue himself, that "the most important and durable doctrines in history survived because they spread beyond the group which initiated them and became connected with a great many other isms and group projects. Only philosophers, intellectual historians, and finicky people with developed aesthetic faculties worry very much about the internal consistency of doctrines" (p. 12).

In Pomper's view the problem for Freud's followers was to make out of his pessi-

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mistic and genetic ideas more "hopeful" theories of history and psychology that would reflect belief in unity, harmony and individual wholeness. Many became, like Freud himself, "poets of the human condition" whose abstruse doctrines often belie their poetic meanings. Pomper labels the favorite metaphors, models and "metaprinciples" of each psychohistorian his "architectonics," that is, the distinctive form each proposes for structuring human development. Freud's is genetic, Erikson's epigenetic, Marcuse's and Brown's dialectical, and Lifton's catastrophic.

Erikson is in many ways the pivotal figure in Pomper's argument. For without abandoning the biological origins of psychoanalytic theory he filled a need signified by Freud's insistence, in *Civilization and Its Discontents,* that "I can offer [my fellowmen] no consolation: for that is what they are all demanding—the wildest revolutionaries no less passionately than the most virtuous believers." It was of course in *Young Man Luther* (1958) and in *Gandhi's Truth* (1969) that Erikson found the biographical forms that were required, although Pomper alertly finds anticipations of Erikson's biographical achievements even in the clinically-oriented *Childhood and Society* (1950;63).

What makes these works genuinely psychohistorical is the form they give to the unfolding of individual development within social transformations, each supplying at appropriate stages of human and social crisis the necessary developmental resources for personal and collective acts of defiance, adaptation and reconciliation. As Pomper notes, the question that Erikson asks is not whether Luther or Gandhi prove one or another of Freud's theories (like the Oedipus complex) but why universal aspects of human development are, as Erikson puts it, "reenacted" in given periods of history. "Eriksonian psychohistory," Pomper says, "shows how their epigenetic development contains the strengths and weakness of the culture's patterns and reigning ideology; how this will be reflected in the identities that ordinary members of all social strata can achieve; and how the gifted few can redeem the many and create new identities, if the historical moment and their communities are ready for them, and their ideologies of human liberation and rejuvenation" (p. 104).

In Pomper's argument, the other psychohistorians he studies might well be counted now among the "gifted few," devoted as they are to such ideologies in our own time. For each in his way shares with Erikson the hope for a universal ethics that will provide an inclusive human identity transcending modern tendencies toward domination by institutions, technology or violence. The dialectics practised by Marcuse and Brown demonstrate how the former's Marxism and the latter's Romantic mysticism share features of the Freudian heritage (e.g., identification of repression as the central problem of society) and radical criticisms of it. More directly utopian than Erikson (perhaps because they were without his clinical experience) they nonetheless, in Pomper's view, also "placed themselves in the service of healing communal ills."

That is also, of course, the goal of Lifton's work, based as it is on the psychology of catastrophe and the symbolization of death. For Lifton, it is not conflict between instincts and repressive agencies that produce human misery but breaks in the connections between the symbolic meanings we give death and immortality and the support they provide for maintaining the "continuity of life" in history. Hence, in his studies of survivors Lifton adds advocacy to the goals of psychohistory, in which renewal comes from confrontation with "totalism," "nuclearism" and other forms of modern "death immersion."

As Pomper demonstrates, Erikson's long shadow has presented psychohistorical

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opportunities yielding unrecognized structural principles. Whether these become "shadows" of their own will be determined by psychohistorical programs that also recognize their own limits. As Pomper himself notes, "Freud's realism was a kind of faith in the ability of scientists to surmount both the forces within us which distort reality and their cultural products. We should not judge him too harshly if we find that he too transposed his constructed reality of the human mind to history and gave history the structure of a neurosis" (p. 168).

Less generous observers of psychohistory have been accused by the distinguished historian Peter Gay of "abusing Freud." But even critics of psychohistory should be grateful for *Freud for Historians* because it gathers in readable form the central arguments for and against the assimilation of psychoanalysis to history. Also, it completes a series that Gay has devoted to the presentation of historiographic methods incorporating techniques from psychology, rhetoric and philosophy. The previous volumes were *Style in History* (1974) and *Art and Act: On Causes in History* (1976). And, of course, Gay's current project, a five volume series on *The Bourgeois Experience,* relies heavily on psychoanalysis for its interpretive strategies.

Now trained as an analyst, Gay recognizes of course the problems in aligning themes and methods in two fields, much less integrating their specialized vocabularies and forms of presentation. Yet the difficulties of applying psychoanalysis should not, according to Gay, be the test of its utility. "The historian's hesitation over psychology is far more tense than the normal indecision of the scholar confronting an unfamiliar discipline: his choice is heavily charged with emotion. He demands of psychology a consensus and precision that no other science of man can command" (p. 45).

Attacks on psychoanalytic history, like David Stannard's widely cited *Shrinking History: On Freud and the Failure of Psychohistory* (1980) typically rely on charges that depth psychologies are too elusive, speculative, and difficult to document and measure. But Gay rejects the idea that representations of the distant past lend themselves to laboratory standards of accuracy, or even to standards of evidence and proof derived from the philosophy of science demonstrated in Adolf Grunbaum's *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis* (1984). Instead, Gay suggests that in the subjective science of psychoanalysis orthodox historians can find help in overcoming some of the limits of traditional methods. "The Freudian corpus," Gay asserts, "is not a tightly knit, comprehensive theory in which general laws can be derived from empirical propositions, and which a crucial experiment might test conclusively. It is rather a family of closely related, often mutually supporting claims ranging from empirical statements to limited generalizations to global theories about the mind" (p. 48).

Far from being "reductionist," therefore, psychoanalysis adds to the methods that make history the synthetic enterprise that it is. The perceptions of the traditional historian "are, as it were intransitive; they depend on the accident of individual talent rather than the ministrations of a dependable psychology. And, often, an accomplished historian shrugs his shoulders in resignation when a psychoanalytic map would have enabled him to go on" (p. 32). Accordingly, *Freud for Historians* is part exposition and argument, and part pep talk and exhortation. Gay relies, in effect, on the authority of his own career to demonstrate how the psychoanalytic "orientation," as he calls it, can produce forms of psychohistory that do justice to both disciplines of the hybrid enterprise.

Gay finds that historians inclined to denunciations of psychoanalysis have often misunderstood its central terms and techniques. Criticism of psychohistory has, more-

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over, often reflected poorly conceived or documented applications, or misunderstanding of psychoanalysis' principles of organization and operation, rather than crucial flaws in the theory itself. Gay is careful to confirm his respect for the unanalysed historian and his capacity to grasp the details of complex historical behavior. His goal is to add to the fund of tools and methods, establishing the propriety of the psychoanalytic approach as yet another form of historical thought.

What is appropriate to one historian of course may be irrelevant, if not intrusive, to another. *Freud for Historians* therefore can be seen as an effort from within the profession to make its practitioners both more venturesome and more accountable on the question of the uses of psychology in history. Those historians and biographers who do take Thomas Kohut's and Gay's advice will find, they propose, unexpected similarities between their old habits and their new capacities. Hence they will be able to say of their subjects, as clinicians do of their patients: "This is how people are: buffeted by conflicts, ambivalent in their emotions, intent on reducing tensions by defensive stratagems, and for the most part dimly, or perhaps not at all, aware why they feel and act as they do" (p. 75). And with a class of historians for Freud in place, psychohistory, within the self-conscious limits also proposed by Pomper, could then claim the legitimacy it deserves.

A posthumous collection of essays by psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut also supports this view. In *Self Psychology and the Humanities* he characterizes the gaps between the disciplines as forms of "tool and method pride." The founder of the increasingly influential psychoanalytic school of "self psychology," Kohut hints at applications for biography and autobiography that remain to be explored. For example, in an essay "On courage" he reaffirms the importance of the "nuclear self" that is independent of an individual's psychopathology and then states his belief that "even some of the socially most significant activities of the great actors on the historical and cultural stage are motivated more by certain deeply anchored, even idiosyncratic, psychic configurations than by a conscientious openness to the subtleties of the social situation and by a responsiveness to the needs of the historical moment" (p. 49).

Kohut also makes a suggestive distinction between those classical forms of psychoanalysis and history that seek to explain the present with reference to the past and those newer forms he calls "Proustian." These are "initiated by the searcher's need to establish a developmental continuity of his self. There is a break. The self is fragmented along the time axis. The Proustian search is to heal this break and cure the self by feeling whole and historically continuous" (p. 217). As editor Charles Strozier notes, Kohut also makes a timely addition to the psychological understanding of leadership in an essay on Hitler. I suspect, however, that Kohut's most important contribution will be in whatever measure of his inventive clinical views—especially on the transformations of narcissism and on empathy—come to be incorporated into psychohistory and biography. For he says of history in general that its purpose is "to make us more human and to maintain our feelings as human beings so that we can be responded to by others and understood by others" (p. 221).

Neither Pomper's inspired synthesis, nor Gay's learned polemics, nor even Kohut's clinical benevolence will convince skeptics of the virtues of psychohistory in its multiple contemporary forms. At its best, however, psychohistory relies on its own skepticism to contain irresponsible uses. Doubtless, Gay acknowledges, "psychoanalysis is an unsafe instrument, as dangerous to the historian who wields it as to the hapless historical subject on whom he tests it" (p. 36). But guidance can be found, if ironically, in

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the self-denigrating and wry caution psychoanalysts, and one might add now psychohistorians, give themselves: "Do not generalize from one case," they will say, "generalize from two."

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NOTES

1. Richard Ellmann, "Freud and Literary Autobiography." *The American Scholar* 54 (1985), 465–79. Peter Loewenberg's "Psychohistory: An Overview of the Field" includes extensive citations for the debate between historians and psychoanalysts (*Decoding the Past: The Psychohistorical Approach* [New York: Knopf, 1984]). In a recent essay, political scientist Michael Shapiro asks this question in the context of a discussion of psychobiography: "Why, one might ask, are some lives described and others not, and why are the descriptions cast in psychological versus political or other modes of writing? What do the representational or discursive practises of various historical periods tell us about what is regarded as important, authoritative and legitimate?" ("Reading Biography," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 16 [1986], 331–65.)
2. A. L. Louch, *Explanation and Human Action* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 223–4.
3. Thomas Kohut, "Psychohistory as History," *American Historical Review* 91 (1986), 336–54.

Ira Bruce Nadel, ed., *Victorian Biography: A Collection of Essays from the Period.* New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1986. Unpaged. $40.00.

The Victorian muse was elegant, erudite and, above all, literate. These complete essays by some of the great names in nineteenth and early twentieth-century criticism and biography are gracious, leisurely and highly intelligent. This gathering of primary material on biography from 1832 to 1911 introduces us to many of the issues seen by the Victorians as central to the genre.

Without exception, these writers see the biographer's task as the depiction of a single individual's life: the essence of character, in Leslie Stephen's phrase. It should be portrayed openly and honestly, they argue, yet with sympathy. And in an age when biographies often ran to more than one volume, Sidney Lee (Leslie Stephen's assistant and then successor at the DNB) sees "discriminating brevity" as essential to proper method. In this, Lee typifies the move during the nineteenth century towards briefer biographies, more critical and selective.

Most of the critics, from Thomas Carlyle (1832, 1838) to Edmund Gosse (1901), agree on the importance of letters. Leslie Stephen, the father of Virginia Woolf and founding editor of the DNB, considers that "while letters become less important as records of events, they preserve their full significance as revelations of character; and that is what the biographer chiefly requires." Edmund Purcell quotes with approval Cardinal Newman's judgment (itself contained in a letter) that "the true life of a man is in his letters" and that "contemporary letters are facts." Charles Whibley, more prudent, adds a cautionary note. In "The Limits of Biography" (1897), he finds the authority of letters to be suspect; removed from their original context, they too easily become "the easiest instrument of falsehood and distortion."

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As the editor notes in a brief but solid introduction, Stephen was instrumental in shaping the course of nineteenth-century biography and its transition to the twentieth. His 1893 essay "Biography" defends the place of biographical dictionaries, despite their limitations of space. A skillful writer can make facts imply far more than they state: "To write a life is to collect the particular heap of rubbish in which his material is contained, to sift the relevant from the superincumbent mass, and then try to smelt it and cast it into its natural mold. . . . The most interesting problem—that of the development of the human character—is generally the most inscrutable."

Many of the writers urge candour rather than the suppression of damaging or sensitive information. However all are very aware of the position of trust and responsibility held by the biographer. Publisher George Bentley and novelists Margaret Oliphant and Mrs. Humphrey Ward discuss the issue. In "Sincerity in Biography" (1881), Bentley urges that Carlyle's gold "must need have some alloy," some qualifying colour to tone down an idolatrous portrait. Wilfrid Ward outlines the difference between balanced portraiture and the exaggeration of caricature. Flaws should be included, but proportion is all. Mrs. Oliphant ("The Ethics of Biography," 1883) sharpens the debate with her portrait of "the helplessness of the dead." Biographers' powers are almost unlimited and can be tyrannous; the great have reason to fear them. She opts for discretion, even suppression. As the editor observes, "this moral position cancels the earlier commitment to truthful lives but vividly displays the dilemma most Victorian biographers and critics encountered."

Boswell's life of Samuel Johnson remains the model, an "incomparable work" in the phrase of Edmund Gosse. To most of the writers collected here, Boswell is the undisputed father of modern biography, despite his debt to Mason's *Life of Gray*. Gosse credits Boswell with altering the general attitude towards biography which, until near the end of the eighteenth century, was considered by the British public to be indiscreet and even ill-bred, the work of hacks and drudges. It was thanks to Boswell that, early in the nineteenth century, biography "suddenly began to take its place as one of the most fertile branches of current literature."

Stephen writes that Boswell founded biography in England much as Gibbon founded history and Adam Smith political economy. Earlier biographers gave us dignified persons in wigs and robes. Boswell thrills us with the feeling of direct communication with the past. He has vanquished time. In the closing essay, Sidney Lee is particularly strong in Boswell's praise while giving, at the same time, an unflattering portrait of Johnson's biographer as self-indulgent, libidinous, drunken, vain and parasitical. Boswell's almost miraculous work came from the singular union of two exceptional human personalities which proved to be mutually complementary: "its flood of reported talk is biographic license, not law. Yet it is the paradoxical truth that Boswell's work illustrates to perfection many features of first importance to right biographic method. In spite of its unconscionable length and diffuseness, Boswell's biography always keeps with admirable tenacity to the fundamental purpose of transmitting personality."

Lee also credits Boswell with being the great champion of biographic frankness, with keeping himself in the shadow of his subject, and with being an industrious collector of data. As to the first point, Boswell bluntly refused a friend's request to soften some of the great doctor's asperities; he would (he wrote) "not cut off the doctor's claws nor make his tiger a cat to please anybody." In Boswell's work, these Victorian writers found the model which defined the form and perhaps helped them to understand their own attraction to it.

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This red and gold volume is handsomely bound, as befits an item in the thirty-nine-volume facsimile series entitled "The Victorian Muse. Selected Criticism and Parody of the Period," edited by William E. Fredeman, Ira Bruce Nadel, and John F. Stasny. Individual items carry their original periodical paginations, leaving the volume itself unpaged: a minor annoyance. Type faces vary, and some require excellent eyes, or a magnifying glass. The great periodicals of the Victorian era such as *Fraser's Magazine, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Temple Bar,* and *The Quarterly Review* were above such trivia.

Victorian Biography is a solid contribution to the field of biographical studies. Each essay is worthy of our attention. And from the collection as a whole emerges a portrait not only of modern biography but of the values of the age. Humanism and responsibility are the tonic notes. Life matters.

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ROBERT ALTER, with the collaboration of Carol Cosman, *A Lion for Love: A Critical Biography of Stendhal.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986. 285 pp. $8.95.

A quotation from Gérard Genette's *Figures II* serves as the epigraph to Part III of Robert Alter's sprightly biography of Stendhal: "The two caryatids of the old style of literary studies are called, one may recollect, the man and his work. The exemplary value of the Stendhal phenomenon comes from the way he shakes these two notions by altering their symmetry, by confusing their difference, by deflecting their relations." Genette's formulation has the value of underlining both the complexity and the importance of the relationship between Henri Beyle and the writing which is now collectively known as the work of Stendhal. It is a relationship that has intrigued and fascinated Stendhal critics since the first global essay on Stendhal by Auguste Bussière in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes* in 1843, less than a year after Stendhal's death. Robert Alter's work is based on the belief that much of this "man-and-his-works" approach has been unsatisfactory, having frequently become bogged down in attempts to discern biographical sources for fictional representations. Alter's intent, then, was to write "a biography in which the narrative and the interpretive strands would be constantly intertwined" while staying clear of the quagmire of sources and the temptation of psychoanalysis. He has succeeded admirably, creating what is surely the best critical biography of his subject to date.

Biographies of Stendhal have not been lacking in either French or English. In France, distinguished *stendhaliens* such as Albert Collignon (1868), Paul Arbelet (1912), Paul Hazard (1927), Henri Martineau (1953), and Victor Del Litto (1965) have produced competent and increasingly perceptive biographies. Matthew Josephson (1946), Joanna Richardson (1974), and Gita May (1977) have made similar contributions in English. These books have their strengths and weaknesses, but none combines sheer insight into the man, Henri Beyle, with first-rate criticism of Stendhal's work to the extent that Alter's book does. Some of these biographies are also more complete than Alter's. Indeed, a biography that would contain all that is known about Stendhal might well fill three or four substantial volumes. There is a wealth of detail about Stendhal's life that is known to specialists that does not appear in this book. Alter has chosen to concentrate on what is significant to the understanding of the man, and while it might be possible to argue that some of the information he has left

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out might also help to understand Stendhal, Alter's decision has resulted in a book that is easily read, though never thin in substance or interpretation.

As Alter's title suggests, one important facet of Stendhal's life which is followed closely is the importance of love. From his boyhood infatuation for Virginie Kubly to his nearly desperate attempts to find love at the end of his life, Stendhal was an active practitioner and keen observer of sexual politics. Alter deals with the Oedipal drama involved in this quest, but he is also keenly aware of the role that literary models play in Stendhal's amorous adventures (which he sometimes endowed with epic grandeur). Yet his need for companionship was perhaps nearly as great as his need for love.

Particularly effective is Alter's treatment of some of the very important moments in Stendhal's life. He perceptively discerns, for example, the great importance of the Moscow campaign in the formation of Stendhal's subsequent behavior and attitudes. The net result of the campaign was that it seriously put into question an understanding of man's nature to which Stendhal had subscribed since adolescence. His notions of heroism, nourished by literature, coupled with his understanding of human behavior as proceeding from a pleasure/pain calculus were shattered on the retreat from Moscow. If he continued to hold to these views after 1813, it was in a very mitigated way, for the campaign had taught him that heroes were far fewer in number than he had thought and that the psychology of the *philosophes* was inadequate to explain the egoism and the brutality he had witnessed. Stendhal's doctrine of the Happy Few, Alter suggests plausibly, began to take definitive shape in the aftermath of the Russian campaign.

Such insights into the man are accompanied by an extraordinary ability to seize the essence of Stendhal's books and to express succinctly their individual value. Alter's discussions are, perforce, short, but few critics have ever been able to compact such penetrating analysis into so limited a space. On *Histoire de la peinture en Italie,* for example, Alter goes directly to the heart of the matter, pointing out that the chief importance of the book in Stendhal's development "is that it involves his own grappling with a major concept of European Romanticism: the relativity of aesthetic value, its determination by national character, which in turn is imagined to be determined by climate and geography." Regarding *Rome, Naples et Florence,* Alter draws attention to the "quality of ripe reflectiveness" as well as Stendhal's awareness of his own contradictions. *Racine et Shakespeare,* he points out, is of interest not for the originality of its ideas, but for its vividness and polemic wit. *La Vie de Rossini*'s importance lies not in what it tells us about Rossini, but in its affirmation of Stendhal's unabated fidelity to Italy. *Les Promenades dans Rome* were valuable in allowing Stendhal to practice "his unique gift of breathtakingly rapid narration." None of these are among Stendhal's major works, but Alter displays a singular ability to cut through the thicket of over a century of criticism to bring the reader to an appreciation of their real worth.

Stendhal's masterpieces are accorded more, though still limited, space. Alter situates their importance not only in Stendhal's development, but in relation to literary history as well. *Le Rouge et le Noir,* which he characterizes as "one of the most totally original masterworks of European fiction" is discussed from the point of view of Stendhal's handling of perspective. *Le Rouge et le Noir* bridges the gap between the two traditions of narration (first-person narratives and third-person narratives) thereby laying the technical groundwork for subsequent achievements in narrative fiction. *Lucien Leuwen* is important for its depiction of the many layers of consciousness and its awareness of the potentials for extreme changes in moral character. In *La Chartreuse de Parme,* Alter stresses the tension Stendhal expresses between youth and age,

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fulfillment and loss, and between exalted solitude and the corruption of political life. As for *Vie de Henry Brulard,* Stendhal's autobiography, Alter considers it "at least in formal terms [as] Stendhal's most radically innovative project." Indeed, the autobiographer's consciousness of the imperfections and inconsistencies of memory, combined with his awareness that he is writing in an established genre, produces a book that is resolutely modern to this day.

Alter has clearly regenerated the "man-and-his-works" approach and brought the genre to an unprecedented level of accomplishment. First published in 1979 by Basic Books and now reissued in paperback by Harvard University Press, *A Lion for Love* will delight, stimulate, and inform specialists and non-specialists alike.

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David Novarr, *The Lines of Life: Theories of Biography, 1880–1970.* West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1986. xii + 202 pp. $18.00.

Anyone who has thought about the nature of biography will find David Novarr's *The Lines of Life* not simply useful but indispensable. A model of exposition, it both summarizes and pursues the various attempts to define the biographical enterprise in the ninety years from 1880 to 1970. Beginning with Leslie Stephen's decision to edit the *Dictionary of National Biography,* Novarr traces the succeeding efforts of writers, biographers, and scholars to determine what biography is as well as what it should be.

Stephen himself began the "progress" of biography, which is to say the project of getting it out from under the sugar coating and discreet protection it had suffered in the Victorian period; and in the same year (1882), Froude, in the first two volumes of his *Life of Carlyle,* for all his admiration of his subject, showed a willingness to reveal Carlyle in all his dyspeptic fullness. Both Stephen and Sidney Lee, who succeeded him as editor of the *DNB,* sought first of all to get the facts of the lives they wrote or edited, to convey them in a businesslike manner, and in the process to commemorate the significant figures in English history. Lee, in his discourses on biography, made commemoration the central aim of the biographer; commemoration did not, however, mean mere praise of the life but recognition of its significance. To achieve that recognition, the biographer had to know the outer life sufficiently to establish a perspective that would lead toward a vision of the inner character; the process involved not art, which Lee saw as original and creative, but craft—a capacity to mold and shape the "history" into a complete life of the subject. Edmund Gosse, following Lee, is even more insistent on the necessity of reaching the inner life—what he calls the adventure of the soul—rather than chronicling actions. And he is more insistent than Lee in regarding the biographer's need of imagination in discovering the psychological centers of personality and his need of art in giving shape and direction to his vision. William Roscoe Thayer, who believed in the Great Man theory of history and who was himself both a distinguished historian and biographer, believed that, though biography was properly to be considered a branch of history, the biographer who wished to approach the veracity of a life would learn as much from novelists as from historians.

There was one other force exerted in this "early modern" period of attempts to define biography—that of Waldo H. Dunn, a mere assistant professor at the college of Wooster. His *English Biography* (1916) was a scholarly attempt "devoted to a careful and somewhat exhaustive study of the subject." Dunn first of all provided a storehouse of the opinions on biography that had accumulated over the centuries, and Nov-

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arr rightly emphasizes how important this storehouse has been for subsequent students of biography (though often unacknowledged by them).

All of these early writers, students, and practitioners of biography were, in their separate ways, concerned with the problem of both bringing biography into and directing it toward literature and art, and away from the twin pressures of science and history that constantly threaten to define the subject. Both history and science presuppose "truth," whereas art pivots on imagination and invention. Biography as a "literary genre" is almost helplessly defensive against these two forces. After all, it is about a historical subject, no matter how unknown; yet it is fatally committed to a narrative account of that subject and is thus inevitably running between novel and history. Add to this the rise of science in the last hundred years, a force that has displaced the moral and exemplary impulses through which Victorian biography both labored and flourished, and you begin to see the situation of both biographer and biography in the twentieth century. Biographers are in the service of three masters: historical accuracy, scientific responsibility in the analysis of data, and narrative desire. They are researchers, psychologists, and would-be novelists. Of these three, scientific theory has proved the weakest, historical accuracy and narrative desire the strongest. Indeed, narrative desire, since it functions at the heart of both history and the novel, is strongest of all. The biographer, drawn to his dead subject, seeks to pursue its life to death. The pursuit, working through narrative desire, is grounded in the strong illusion of giving it life, yet just as surely takes that life. Seeing this paradox, Henry Adams advised Henry James to take his own life in autobiography in order to prevent a biographer from taking it. Adams, in *The Education,* had been true to his own counsel, having converted the autobiographical "I" into a historical unit of force, a "he" that not only could be but had to be terminated.

I have paused in the consideration of Novarr's pursuit of twentieth-century biographical theory to emphasize how the biographer's situation, in addition to reflecting the conflict between historical accuracy and narrative desire, conceals the act of narrative execution beneath the illusion of narrative invention. In this connection, it should not surprise us that Lytton Strachey, who recognized these contradictions at the heart of the biographical project, was probably the most decisive biographer of the twentieth century. Though Strachey did not write a great deal about theory, Novarr pays particular attention to the preface to *Eminent Victorians,* showing that Strachey's ideas on biography were much less revolutionary than his practice. He also calls attention to Strachey's remarks about the Duc de Saint-Simon in his *Landmarks of French Literature* (1912), in which Strachey observed that Saint-Simon's "hatreds exceeded his loves and . . . he was, as it were, more at home when he detested. Then the victim is dissected with loving hand" so that he never forgot "to commit the last insult, and to breathe into their nostrils the fatal breath of life." Here it seems to me, Novarr might have seen just how Strachey understood the true paradox of biography. Whereas conventional biographers, under the loving illusion of "giving life" to their subjects, actually pursue them to death, Strachey accepted—even delighted in—the murderous element of the enterprise and, by murdering his subjects, actually succeeded in breathing more life into them than "devoted" biographers are able to do. That breath came in the form of compressed irony whose source was the pleasure of hating, and it brought to biography the kind of art and force Henry Adams had shown in his *John Randolph* (1882). Gamaliel Bradford had something of Strachey's compression, but he lacked the venom to make his victims writhe with life. Like Strachey he was highly selective in choosing the evidence for shaping his psychographs, as he

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called them, but he was more interested in drawing character than in unmasking and exposing it. Yet both Strachey and Bradford in their separate ways were far more interested in the "art" of biography than they were in either the "facts" or the history. Strachey showed something akin to contempt for the dreary accumulation of detail and the slavery to chronology characteristic of biography, preferring to make swift and economical penetration of his subjects.

This conflict between fact and art, between history and literature, which had fully emerged in the twenties, remains the primary concern of biographical criticism and theory throughout the period Novarr takes into account. Whether it is Bernard DeVoto, Lord David Cecil, C. V. Wedgwood, or Edgar Johnson writing on the subject, all are in one way or another trying to reconcile the contradictory claims of history and science on the one hand, and the urges and needs of art on the other. Virginia Woolf, who had tried her hand at a biography of Roger Fry, felt sufficient constraint in the form to free herself into the experimental and fantastic *Orlando,* which she perversely subtitles "A Biography." She subsequently contended that biography could never be an art precisely because its factual component at best contradicted and at worst stifled the freedom of the true artist's vision.

Novarr, in his fine, clear summary of all this significant biographical criticism, shows how often critics who face the contradictory claims of history and art tend to seek a compromise that relegates biography to the status of craft. Novarr himself wants to claim more for biography. That is why he feels that Leon Edel has made the most significant contribution to the discussion of biography since World War II. Small wonder that Edel in his *Literary Biography* (1957) cites Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* as a model from which the would-be biographer might read the possibilities for biographical vision. Edel, much as he recognizes the necessities that fact and history impose upon the biographer, nonetheless sees biography as a form of creative art. The biographer, with the aid of psychoanalytic theory, at once penetrates and interprets the life of his subject, organizing his narrative in such a way as to shape and discover the springs of life that lie behind the work. The discovery is not merely a disclosure of objective truth but a revelation growing out of the symbiotic relationship between biographer and subject. In stressing the intensity and depth of this relationship, Edel authorizes not only his preference for psychoanalytic theory but also his vision of biography as creative act, capable of freeing the biographer from the slavery of chronology and fact.

Although Novarr lucidly discloses how the books of John Garraty and Paul Murray Kendall offer important additions to an understanding of the nature of the form, he finds both these authors falling back to the old compromised lines of defense, behind which biography becomes a craft. Novarr in his conclusion makes clear his wish for a criticism of biography that recognizes the form as an indispensable possibility of what we call literature. All who have read his exquisite summary of biographical criticism will be in his debt. They may be no closer to a comprehensive theory of biography, but they will be in a stronger position than they could have imagined to *think* about the form. Such thought, it seems to me, will have to pursue a rigorous theory of narrative itself, for it is nothing less than narrative on which biography both rests and rides. The wish for narrative—and the attendant repressions that accompany the wish—is what draws us toward the story of another life and drives us toward the story of our own. Suspended in our own life story, we long for the conclusions of former lives.

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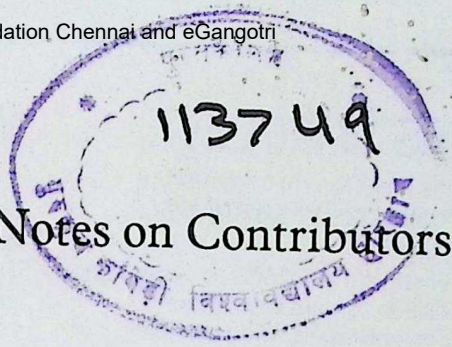

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